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[WAITING FOR THE VERDICT.]

LADY ROSLYN'S MYSTERY.

CHAPTER XLI.

And if her eye was filled with tears,
That stifled feeling dare not shed,
As through her ears
Those winged words like arrows sped,
What could such be but maiden fears?

Bride of Abydos.

ALIX stood speechless, with clasped hands, and blanched face, before the baronet who claimed guardianship over her. Her heart beat so fast and thick, that she could hardly speak for some minutes. Meanwhile the farmer's wife sat erect upon the sofa, her starched cap seeming to bristle with spite; the sharp bones in her throat standing out, in the vehemence of her indignation.

"I thought how it was," she said, scornfully. "I always knew the tale of being carried off couldn't very well be true; and when no answer came to the letters, I saw pretty clearly how the land lay."

"If the address had not been found, madam," cried Alix, speaking suddenly and impetuously, "they would have been returned here. I now quite believe that somebody has intercepted the letters. Oh! how miserable, how very wretched I am!"

"The disobedient deserve none other!" said the baronet, in a canting tone of voice. "You must now return to the home of your relations, to the guardianship of your distressed and outraged father. My carriage waits, and I insist upon a prompt obedience."

"Out, out, hurry with you at once, you saucy young jade!" cried the farmer's wife, with a spite that bordered on the savage.

"Madam!" cried Alix, "I cannot go away with that disguised man. I tell you that my blood will be on your hands, if you try to force me, if you succeed in dismissing me under the impression that he utters truth, and that I speak falsehood. I will resist to the last," continued Alix, warming into an energetic display of despair. "I will shriek out with vehemence, I will fill the house and the yard

with my cries, I will appeal to the men-servants and maid-servants. I will call upon them to save me from this most fearful fate."

"She is insane, I fear, madam," said the baronet, shaking his head mournfully at the farmer's wife. "I can only beg you to pay not the slightest attention to her, and now let us hurry her off; she is sufficiently equipped for the journey!"

As he spoke, he laid his hand roughly on the arm of Alix, and dragged her forward. She raised her voice with a loud, agonized cry.

"Is there nobody to help me?" she said. "Oh, that the master of the house were here."

Sir Horace Hawkswade did not relinquish his savage gripe of the shoulder of Alix, and the farmer's wife laid hold of her other arm.

This woman was envious of the interest which Alix had excited in her husband's mind; she was of that spiteful and bitter nature which can see no good in any human creature, which loves to detract, to find spots in the sun, blemishes in the lily. She had taken a desperate dislike to Alix from the first moment of her arrival, and this dislike had been fostered by her husband's preference for the helpless girl.

"She shall leave my house, sir, at once. I will not shelter her under my roof, don't fear."

Between them both they dragged the girl out of the room, and across the wide stone hall. At the moment when her cries were loudest, and when her fear and despair had reached their height, Alix, to her infinite joy, heard the voice of the worthy farmer in the yard. In another moment he had entered the hall, and stood for an instant in amazement, contemplating the girl and her persecutors.

"I don't allow that kind of work here," he burst forth suddenly, and roughly laying his hand on the shoulder of the baronet. "That young thing shan't be dragged out of my house against her will, and I tell you so to your face, whoever you are!"

"I am her father, sir!" replied the baronet. "I am a doctor of Edinburgh. My name is Wotton. This most disobedient daughter of mine, after giving her good mother and myself a world of trouble, escaped from home one day, about a fortnight since, joined

some bad people, and absolutely came to London. Thither I traced her, and from thence to a very disreputable inn out on the moor, where it seems she got up a sort of friendship with a low person, the wife of the landlord; from thence I tracked her hither. I know not myself what base motive impelled her to come here, to trouble and disturb you."

"It was because she was starved, ill-used, cruelly done by," said the farmer. "She came here almost dead from want. As to thinking that I'll believe your tale, until you can bring some credible witness to prove what you say—as to your thinking any such thing, I say, dismiss the idea at once, and let the girl go; she don't leave the house under your guidance, till I know more about you than I do now!"

"I will bring an action against you, man!" howled Sir Horace Hawkswade, giving way to a terrible burst of fury. "I will ruin you, I will put you to law expenses that shall swallow up all your gains, and reduce you to a crust of bread. I tell you, I will have my daughter. I have come here to fetch her away, and I will have her!"

"Not while I have an arm to spare and a dozen men and neighbours within call," returned the farmer. "No, no, sir," and he laid an iron clasp on the shoulder of the baronet. "That young girl does not leave this house, until you prove to my satisfaction, that she is indeed your daughter."

Sir Horace Hawkswade gave vent to the most terrible oaths and curses.

"Prove," he reiterated, "and to your satisfaction. I will go to the nearest town, and obtain a warrant for the apprehension of this girl, whom you have kidnapped."

"Go and do your worst," cried the farmer, with a laugh of irony. "I have not the least fear of you, nor of what you can do."

By this time Alix was released from the savage grasp of Sir Horace, and she stood trembling and pale in the passage, looking at the farmer's wife with beseeching eyes, and pleading her own cause with the silent eloquence of fear and entreaty. But, the woman was blind to such appeals.

"A bold-faced creature," she said, "coming here to get her bed and board for nothing, and expecting to lord it over us all, when she has run away from her own father and mother, and behaved worse than a poorhouse girl."

For the notions of this woman were narrow, and her heart was hard. In her estimation, to be poor was to be wicked. A poorhouse girl was only another name for a thief.

"I won't have any of this shameful wickedness, wife," said the farmer, sternly. "I won't have any abuse of the innocent under my roof. It is your duty as a woman and a wife to protect this helpless girl, not to add thorns to her pillow."

By this time the baronet had taken his departure; he had filled the hall and passage with his loud threats and curses as he passed out, but now peace, or at least silence, was restored in the dwelling, and Alix raised her heart thankfully to heaven, reflecting that she had had afforded to her by its mercy a staunch protector in the farmer.

"Now, then, let us have supper," cried the worthy man, "and banish the memory of that ruffianly fellow. Come, wife, put away those sour looks, and let us have some good cold venison pie and a piece of cheese, and anything else that you have that's good."

"I will eat nothing, thank you," said Alix to the farmer, for the memory of his wife's cruel words yet rankled in her heart.

"But I say you shall," cried the farmer. "You shall have a good supper and a glass of strong ale to put courage into your heart."

He took her by the hand as he spoke, and led her into the little parlour.

Alix was so completely convinced that her letters had miscarried, that she did not scruple to tell her good protector of the circumstances connected with the post-office, and the man who was related to the postmistress. The next thing that followed was an examination of the herd boy, but nothing could be elicited by any means from him. He had received the letters, carried them safely to the village, and placed them in the hands of the postmistress. The following day the farmer wrote to Rellen Polack at his town address. He took the precaution of riding over to the post town, and putting the letter into the general post there, and now Alix awaited the sentence of release with an eagerness that never slept. Two days after the farmer had gone into the market town to post the letter, as Alix was sitting in the porch watching the setting sun, as was her wont, she heard footsteps, and then suddenly Rellen Polack stood before her. His face was white, his eyes blazed, his lip trembled.

"Alix! Oh, my life and love," he said, vehemently; "and you have suffered, and I have not been able to come to your help. I have searched for you, Alix. I have advertised. How is it that while you were writing to me and I was advertising for you, that you never saw my advertisements, nor responded to them?"

The inexperienced girl was fain to confess that the thought of Rellen's advertising had not struck her, and that she had not seen a paper in the house of the good, simple farmer, except the *County Chronicle*, the only journal which ever appeared in his family. Thus the repeated advertisements in the *Times* had remained unresponded to. It was a moment of just triumph for Alix when, appearing in the little parlour before the farmer's wife, she presented to her the distinguished and fashionable-looking Rellen as her future husband, and showed her a letter from Lady Margaret Alden, couched in the most affectionate terms, entreating her to write and inform her of her safety.

"You see, madam," said Alix, eagerly, "my letters were abstracted from the post. As soon as your kind husband went on to the market town and put my last letter in safely, it was answered in person."

The farmer's wife was a little discomfited, for Rellen came largely provided with money, and he offered to repay the farmer's wife double and treble for any expense of which Alix had been the occasion. The woman was as fond of money as she was of evil speaking; often, alas! the two propensities are found in bad natures. Gladly would she have grasped at the ten-pound note which Rellen offered her, had not the farmer interfered to prevent it.

"No, no," he said, "nothing of the kind. I'm only too glad, too delighted to have been able to do anything for this sweet creature."

He pressed his hospitality on Rellen, and Rellen did not refuse to remain to tea. Afterwards Alix bade a grateful adieu to her kind protector, and then followed Rellen into the close carriage which he had travelled in from the station.

"How was it, my love, that you did not come to London?" asked Rellen.

"I had no money, Rellen, and that good farmer

would not have trusted me to come alone; besides it was his harvest time, and you could not have expected him to leave his business, and travel up to London with a penniless girl, who could get no answers to her letters."

"What a deep-laid, fearful scheme this has been!" said Rellen Polack, passionately. "Are you quite convinced that your persecutor is really Sir Horace Hawkade?"

"I am convinced, not only because I recognized his voice and his eyes, but also because the men who assisted in carrying me off mentioned him, indeed called him by name in my presence."

"It shall not rest," growled Rellen between his set teeth. "You are not perhaps aware that Sir Horace married a relation of Lady Margaret Alden's, a niece, I believe, and when her ladyship saw the letter which you wrote to me, naming Sir Horace as your persecutor, she could not restrain her agitation. All sorts of thoughts seemed to rise up in her mind, suspicions, memories. She is most anxious to see you and to consult with you. I must seek out this landlord of the 'Haven,' and this Joe of the post-office that you speak of. It is fortunate that we know the names of both these men. They shall be bribed into disclosing the name of their infamous employer."

Alix shuddered.

"What will be done to Sir Horace," she asked, "if he be proved guilty of this design on my life and liberty?"

"Let him look to himself," responded Rellen between his shut teeth. "It shall go hard with him, doubt not."

The journey to town was performed in perfect safety, and at the mansion of Lady Margaret, Alix was received with open arms and rapturous welcome. She was asked no questions on the first night of her arrival, but the following day a conclave was held in the library, consisting of Lady Margaret, Rellen Polack, and Hubert Lord Sayton. Hubert's face was bright and eager with joy at again finding himself in the presence of Alix. Yet his joy was damped, for in a very few days, as he knew too well, she would belong to another. Her abduction had delayed her marriage; indeed, it had been fixed originally to take place on one of those very unhappy days which the poor girl had spent at the farmhouse waiting for her letters.

But Rellen Polack seemed now especially anxious that nothing should come between him and his bride, and even while Hubert, Lady Margaret, and Alix herself, were busily discussing the possibility of taxing Sir Horace Hawkade with attempted crime, he would break off impatiently to discuss the subject that lay nearest to his heart, the speedy possession of Alix as his wife. She, meanwhile (especially when she found herself in the presence of Hubert) was sensible of an innate shrinking from the idea of a marriage with Rellen Polack, which was not wholly attributable to the changed state of her feelings. There seemed some insurmountable barrier between her and this union, something which made her shrink from his caressing words.

"I must and will find out this mystery connected with Sir Horace Hawkade," said Lady Margaret. "He is the widower of my beloved niece, who married a second time against my will and advice. Yet I never knew that she had any material reason to repent her act. They appeared tolerably happy together. He took her up to a large old country mansion of his in the north of England, and there they seem to have led a peaceful life together, until one morning I was startled by receiving the news of the sudden death of my dear niece. She had, it seemed, fainted away and had struck her head against a mantelpiece, and died almost immediately. It seemed that the sudden death of his wife so preyed upon the mind and spirits of Sir Horace, that he could not endure his own country for the space of several years. He travelled about on the Continent and in the East. There was a child too, little Ada, and that dear child, it seemed, he was much attached to; he took her abroad, and there she died."

"Are you quite sure," asked Hubert Sayton, suddenly, "that Sir Horace derived no benefit from the deaths of the child and her mother?"

"Most certainly he derived benefit. He came into a fortune of two hundred thousand pounds," responded Lady Margaret.

Alix had been listening attentively to this discussion, and now she came and stood before Lady Margaret Alden, with a strange expression in her brilliant dark eyes, a bright glow of excitement upon her delicate cheek.

"If the stepdaughter of Sir Horace was named Ada, and if he gained property through the death or disappearance of that child, I believe that I am that very girl," she said, emphatically.

And then, while they all listened breathlessly, and looked at her with excited glances, Alix recounted to them her feelings, and the strange memo-

ries that had awakened up in her mind, when she was shut up in the dreary room in that low, poor street in London, after the old woman had inveigled her from the park, where she was waiting for Hubert Sayton.

She told her hearers that while mounting the stairs she had encountered for an instant Sir Horace Hawkade; that is to say, she had caught a glimpse of him standing in a small room which went off the landing. He was undisguised by wig and spectacles, and she recognized him as the gentleman who had entered the drawing-room of the Countess of Roslyn on the previous day, and whose eyes had so reminded her of those of her sinister guardian.

Immediately that she was left alone in the miserable room, which served as her prison, a full tide of recollection poured in upon her. Her spirit seemed carried back into the past years of her early childhood. She remembered a grand old house, a great flower-garden, thick shrubberies, and woods surrounding all; a large hall, with pillared arches and family portraits; a dim but splendid drawing-room, ornamented with antique furniture. More than this the young girl remembered as she went on to describe.

The floodgates of memory opened, and disclosed to her (even while she was talking to Lady Margaret) many things and circumstances which had been swallowed up or submerged under the tide of events which had followed.

She remembered a pale, gentle mother with timid voice, who loved her much, and wore a dress of dove-coloured silk. She remembered this gentle mother's performance on the organ, and that there was one in a small room, hung with red, in the house she was speaking of. Farther than this, she remembered more vividly than before the tall stout man, with heavy beard, loud voice, and terrible eyes, the man who so frequently made her mother weep and tremble; the man who was always asking her to sign papers—"to write her name on great papers," as Alix expressed it, using unconsciously the idiom of her infancy—and her mother had sometimes refused, saying to her husband, as Alix remembered the words:

"You will beggar my child."

Then growing whiter as she told the story, Alix recounted how that one especial night she had fallen asleep in the drawing-room, and had awakened up in a fright, to listen to angry words spoken by the man who was the terror of both their lives. She saw her mother weep, heard her use words of expostulation; then followed a blow—a scream. She remembered rushing forward in an excitement of agony unutterable and overwhelming, even in the retrospect. Then she was carried upstairs by the tall man, who made her drink something sweet and strong. She remembered no more!

Lady Margaret had listened to this tale of Alix like one in a dream; but when the young girl came to the end of her story, she rushed towards her, and clasped her in her arms in an ecstasy of delight, mingled with pain, indignation, and horror, against the man who had committed so many crimes.

"It is easily seen," she exclaimed. "He murdered the mother. Something like compunction prevented him from murdering the child, but since the child was a witness to the dreadful deed he had perpetrated, he strove to destroy her reason by means of poisonous drugs, and placed her then, Mr. Polack, under the care of your mother. Had his conscience allowed him to rest, he would never have been discovered, but he goes down to the house where he has left his step-child, after the long lapse of years, tormented by the fear of some sudden discovery, dreading the waking up of the drugged child's memory, perhaps hoping to hear that she was dead. He is so far deceived, that he leaves the house of your mother, Mr. Polack, believing that our dear child has become an idiot. Afterwards he suddenly meets her at the house of his late ward, Lady Roslyn; her story is related to him, and he reads by her eyes, guesses from her sudden exclamations, that she has recognized him. Whereupon this man becomes mad with fear and guilty terror; he hires assassins, or those who would have become such, and our Alix is carried off from the heart of London in the middle of the day. But why do I call you Alix? You are Ada—Ada Treherne, the daughter of my beloved niece, the heiress to two hundred thousand pounds, which you shall claim forthwith from this infamous creature, on pain of his instant exposure, prosecution and disgrace."

Rellen Polack had listened eagerly to all that Lady Margaret had proposed, but now a cloud came over his face.

"I fear, your ladyship," he said respectfully, "that we shall find it most difficult to force the property out of the hands of Sir Horace. We have no testimony to go upon, only the unsupported assertions of our dear Alix. Let her marry me instantly—to-day

—to-morrow—and then she will be for ever protected from his wiles."

"You are naturally anxious, Mr. Polack," responded Lady Margaret, "to make Alix your own, but I feel convinced now that she is my great-niece, the heiress to my fortune. I therefore feel as though I had some claim upon her, and at least I beg of you a little delay of this marriage. I fear it may rather complicate affairs; it may give our opponents a handle to hold by; they may say we are conspirators."

"Madam," interrupted Rellen, angrily, "I see how it is. You consider that your noble house will be degraded by the alliance of your niece with a humble individual like myself."

"I have no such narrow notions, Mr. Polack," said Lady Margaret, offering him her hand. "My niece is pledged to become your wife, and she will fulfil her engagement, therefore make yourself easy."

The heart of Alix sank within her.

CHAPTER XLII.

Slight are the outward signs of evil thought,
Within, within, 'twas there the spirit wrought;
Love shows all changes—hate, ambition, guile,
Betray no farther than the blither smile.

The Corsair.

LORD ROSLYN'S illness continued for the whole of that day whereon we last left him, carried or led almost insensible to his chamber.

Adine was excluded from the room entirely, but a spirit of resistance against the constant interference of Vayle Malvern had risen up within her, and she resolved that she would speak her mind openly, but with dignity, immediately on the recovery of Lord Roslyn. Meanwhile, she suffered an intense anxiety respecting his health; she wandered disconsolately up and down the length of her own apartments, she sent incessantly messengers to the sick room to ask how the patient was progressing. She felt that there was more mystery connected with this sudden attack of illness than she was herself able to account for, even in her private thoughts and speculations. What mystery there was in her own past career she had more than once nerved herself with a great resolve to confess openly to Lord Roslyn.

Always, and in every case, Vayle Malvern had stepped in between her and her husband, and had caused newer and more complicated estrangement between them.

There was in the garden at Roslyn Manor a fantastic and gloomy row of trees, cut somewhat after the fashion of those yews and cypresses at Versailles. But the trees in this English garden were much larger. They were of monster growth indeed, and of exuberant strength. The constant pruning of the gardener was required to keep them in shape. These shapes were strange and grotesque; one was like the dome of St. Paul's, another had some fanciful resemblance to a tall soldier on guard, a third had even some likeness to a ship. Others had indeed no definite shape, but seen in the first faint dusk of an autumn evening, when the west was lined with red, and the shadows were creeping over the sky, they assumed something goblin-like and terror-haunting. Superstitious villagers would not have walked down the "Dark Walk" as it was called, after it became dark.

"Those trees are weird and awful," whispered the voices of wonder and fear among the servants. They had even been heard to whisper before now, that words distinctly audible had passed between the tall soldier and another tree, whose extravagantly-cut branches gave it some semblance to a monk with a hood and a long robe.

In this melancholy walk, shut away as it was from the sight of the house, pacing on the rich green pathway of turf which lay between the roots of the trees, was Adine Lady Roslyn. She had just received a message banishing her completely from her husband's chamber for the night. She had partaken of a slight repast, refusing all the ceremony of dinner, and then wrapping a shawl over her head she went out to solace her drooping spirits as best she might, in solitude and the night air.

She walked up and down the yew-tree walk, until the last red light had faded out of the west. A few moments more and the moon had sailed up in full splendour from the heavens beyond the wooded hills to the left; dew had fallen heavily, the night breeze rustled with a faint whisper among the surrounding shrubs, the odours of the rich flowers in the splendid gardens were wafted in delicious fragrance towards Adine. She paused for a moment, sighed, and then sat down upon a low, carved seat which was placed for the accommodation of visitors to the yew-tree walk.

"This is a beautiful world," murmured Adine to herself, "and I am surrounded by a kind Providence with some of the most beautiful things this earth contains, yet how sad is my lot, how desolate is my heart!"

At this juncture Adine distinctly heard a whisper in the tree against which her seat was placed.

"Lady Roslyn," said a voice, "may I venture to disturb your reverie?"

It was Vayle Malvern, the evil genius of the house of Roslyn, who addressed himself to her. He came forward now, and stood before her under the full blaze of the refulgent harvest moon, his pale evil face looking paler than was its wont. Adine's heart swelled within her when she looked at this man, and remembered all that he had made her suffer.

There is strongly in human nature a great repugnance towards the messenger of evil tidings, even when that messenger is pure of all blame. But when instinct whispers to us that he who stands before us charged with the bad news, has been himself the instigator of much of the harm, it is no marvel if we feel towards him a strong and bitter indignation.

"What new story are you prepared to tell me to-night, Mr. Malvern? There cannot be much more to communicate. I know of Lord Roslyn's infatuation for the needlewoman. Do not distress me by alluding to the subject again to-night; I really cannot bear it."

"Alas, were it not that your very life is at stake, that Roslyn's infatuation is pushing him beyond the limits of crime, I would hesitate, I would pause before plunging a sword-thrust into a heart so tender and so faithful as yours, most beautiful, most angelic Countess of Roslyn."

The voice of the hypocrite trembled with agitation, which was not altogether feigned, since he was playing indeed for a desperate stake.

"The sword has entered my heart and rankles there," said Adine, in a sad, cold tone. "I know that my husband is infatuated with this woman. When he has recovered, I shall pray of him to send her away. I have some communications to make also, and I feel convinced, that when once a clear understanding is established between us, much of what I endure now will cease to afflict me; meanwhile, I wish for no interference—excuse my plain speaking—no more tales, insinuations, suspicions."

"You are severe, but you are afflicted, dear lady, and affliction warps our judgment, and makes us unjust. Willingly would I keep silence regarding this most unhappy affair, but it would prove your death!"

"My death?" echoed Adine. "This is some reference to a conversation I had with you in our drawing-room in town. I remember you wished to accuse Roslyn of a desire to poison me, Mr. Malvern. I will not listen to a word of that kind again. I have heard too much from you. I do wrong in believing one syllable which you utter against my husband. Your stories are, I consider, preposterous; they either emanate from an excited imagination or a wicked heart."

Adine spoke with more warmth than was her wont. Her voice was tremulous, her heart beat fast and loud. Seen by the moonbeams, her pale, scarpic face, and large eyes glittering with tears, might have reminded Malvern of some divine Madonna after Giorgione.

"Adine," said Vayle Malvern, "may I call you so? Creature refined and angelic beyond the ordinary types of human clay—creature belonging more to heaven than to earth! How shall I relate the tale which I have to tell? May heaven assist me, for words fail, and my heart grows sick!"

The schemer paused as if in violent agitation. He drew out his handkerchief and held it to his eyes; a sigh seemed to convulse his whole frame—a sob rather, as of a man in a strong agony.

Adine looked at him in astonishment. His acting was perfect, and she began to fear that he had indeed some ill news to communicate.

"What do you mean?" she faltered.

He looked at her for an instant with a cold gleam of triumph in his glance. He had brought her to ask, to question him, after saying a moment before that she would hear nothing of what he had to say.

"I mean that Roslyn, infatuated to madness by his love for Mrs. Dasham, has conceived the most diabolical notion of poisoning you. Last night he placed some deadly drug in the large crystal jar of water which is filled and placed near your bed every night, since you are subject at times to thirst. Last night by some chance the jars were changed; the jar was carried into the earl's room, and he drank a small portion of the poisoned water this morning, not knowing that it was what he had placed for you. The action of the drug is slow and deadly. Thus Lord Roslyn was not surprised to find that you had taken an early walk this morning. I went into his room early, and my eye, accustomed to study chemistry in all its branches, was not slow to discover by the sediment at the bottom of the crystal jar what had been Roslyn's aim. I flew off at once to

the wood, where I discovered him with you. I took him by the arm, hurried him home, told him of what he had been guilty, and while reproaching him with his wickedness, I entreated him to swallow the antidote to the poison. He was obstinate and refused to do so. He said that he had failed in removing the only obstacle which barred him out from happiness, and that now the sooner he died himself the better. He went into breakfast, in spite of my earnest entreaties that he should swallow the antidote. You know the result; he became suddenly ill. I do not anticipate danger to his life," continued Vayle Malvern, "because my system of treatment is excellent, but I must tell you that his brain is becoming terribly affected by his violent infatuation for Mrs. Dasham. And what do you expect from a madman, but crime? Suicide will be his next attempt; he threatens me with that. Lady Roslyn, if you love your erring husband, you will join with me, and aid me to have him placed under proper medical restraint. The great responsibility is certainly yours. I pity you from my heart, but I must tell you what I consider to be your duty."

Adine bent her head into her hands. She was struck speechless by this false tale.

"What do you say, Lady Roslyn?" pursued the schemer. "Will you aid me in protecting Roslyn from his own violence? Shall I write to Sir Peter Carey, the great authority in these matters? and shall some doctors and medical attendants come down and remove Roslyn to-night, or at least to-morrow morning?"

"No," said Adine, wildly clasping her hands—"no. Roslyn's brain is not affected; nothing can be more connected than his conversation, more self-possessed than his conduct, more clear than his reasoning faculties. I will not write to Sir Peter Carey. He is a great and good man, but I have heard it stated that he has studied affections of the brain until he has made that one subject paramount, and he is always suspicious of nearly everybody. He will be likely to pronounce Roslyn mad upon my single testimony. No; I will not write to Sir Peter Carey."

Vayle Malvern bit his lip through in his mortification. Hitherto he had schemed cleverly and well, and had succeeded in keeping apart these two loving hearts, but he felt all the while that their passionate affection for each other was stronger than his machinations. They were like two young eagles shut up in cages apart, beating wildly against the bars, and panting to fly away together into the free air of the sweet heavens.

No cage that his subtle brains had built could keep them asunder for ever. The Count Lechelle, Mrs. Dasham, the needlewoman, those two human beings whose names he had used so far with success, in establishing suspicion between the Roslyns, those two dark shadows, would dissolve like the goblin shapes of the mountain mists, when once the strong light of the love of the earl and the countess was brought to bear upon his false stories. Detection must come at last, unless death or imprisonment kept one from the other.

This idea of a madhouse was Vayle Malvern's last hope, and he turned ill and cold at the thought that if it failed he might be tempted into baser and, more deadly crime.

"You will see the state into which Roslyn has fallen," said Vayle Malvern, sadly. "You will find him in a high fever, raging, storming, and vociferating, and yet you must not see him, his state is too fearful."

"Does he talk of the needlewoman?" asked Adine, with the quick, painful jealousy of love.

"Incessantly," responded Malvern, eagerly, "he raves of her. Oh, if you could see the letters he has written about that woman!"

"I know it," said Adine, coldly, "I saw her reading one in the summer-house."

"And you can forgive him?" asked Vayle Malvern, violently.

"Until seventy times seven," responded the countess in a low voice, gentle as the murmur of a summer sea breeze. "I hate sin, but I pardon and love the sinner; would shield him with my own life, and as yet it is only infatuation, not sin. And there is good in the young person; she is pretty, vain, weak, but not vile."

"Oh, what sweet philanthropy," sneered Malvern. "Lady Roslyn, you are too good for this world; but let us now talk of business. Unless you send for medical attendants, Roslyn will commit suicide. Yes, Lady Roslyn, before the morning he may be a corpse, but there is no time to obtain medical advice before midday to-morrow; for heaven's sake do not delay it afterwards."

"I will go to my husband at once," said Adine, rising suddenly to her feet, "let him be in what state he may."

"Come then, if you will," replied Vayle Malvern,

"but you must, if you value your life, take in with you two or three of the men-servants, since Roslyn is very violent against you, and he might make a dash at you. I wished to preserve his sad state a secret from the household; as long as you are not there, he is comparatively quiet, and nothing has been discovered or suspected; still, if you insist upon seeing him, I suppose the exposure must be made."

Foiled at every turn, her best feelings harrowed and outraged, her love, so it seemed to her, spurned and trampled on, Adine, proud Countess of Roslyn, wrung her hands and burst into weeping.

"Take my advice, and have Lord Roslyn placed under safe medical restraint," pursued Malvern, speaking quickly. "I cannot appear in the affair. You must be the acting party. There is no other way to save his life. Consider he may speedily be restored to all his faculties under the skillful treatment of Sir Peter Carey. Write, write, Lady Roslyn, write to-night; write what I shall dictate."

"Sir Peter Carey may not take the view of my husband's case that you take," said Adine.

"He may not," responded Malvern, and the thought that Sir Peter might for once judge him to be sane was fraught with terror to Malvern. "But you must write, state the symptoms, tell the form the madness takes, incessant cries for somebody whom he loves, and cannot see."

Adine sighed a long, tremulous sigh. "Then if it must be done," she said, "let us go and do it."

She moved slowly towards the house as she spoke, and Vayle Malvern followed her. In the library, with the lamp burning brightly on the table, Adine sat down to her hateful task. Malvern stood by her side, and dictated the letters she was to write.

It was couched in terms of most earnest entreaty that Sir Peter would hasten to Roslyn at once, since Lady Roslyn had reason to fear that Lord Roslyn had a sudden and violent attack on the brain. Then the letter was dispatched to the post, and Lady Roslyn retired to her own apartments.

"The more I struggle to escape from the cruel chain of circumstances that environ me, the more they press around me, the more closely they hem me in. This morning I rose, resolved to have a full explanation with Roslyn. Malvern (always Vayle Malvern) comes between us like something evil, separates us completely. How is it that he is the one chosen by fate to act as the barrier between my husband and myself. It seems to me that my dread and dislike of him increase more and more. While I am with him I believe all he says, I have no other alternative, but when I find myself alone, I doubt him again completely. Oh, Roslyn, why am I estranged thus from you, forbidden to go into your room, now, while you are ill? I am weary, weary of my life!"

She threw herself into an easy-chair and wept very bitterly. She scarcely slept during the night. The morning found her restless, unrefreshed, miserable. She called her maid and desired her to make her a hasty toilette; then she went out into the grounds and paced about anxiously. She knew that before long Vayle Malvern would join her. He came indeed very soon, and they sat under the sheltering branches of a large mulberry tree on a secluded lawn.

"Tell me, tell me," began Adine, eagerly, "what kind of night has he passed?"

"I would rather not recall it," responded Malvern, shaking his head and turning aside. "It was one incessant struggle the whole night, one perpetual outcry for that terrible woman to be brought to him, that he might fling himself at her feet, and weep out his life there."

Adine turned pale, and her heart sank. "It must be madness and infatuation," she said. "Roslyn is not naturally a base man, but a noble one, in whose soul and in whose life all good and holy thoughts and deeds find place. This is a slight brain attack."

"Slight, Lady Roslyn," echoed Malvern, with one of his slow, ominous head shakings, "heaven grant that it may prove so! I can say nothing else."

"You always forebode the worst, Mr. Malvern," cried Adine, distractedly. "You never suffer me to hope, if you can prevent it. There is surely something cruel in your method of treating these circumstances."

"I pardon everything, Lady Roslyn, because of your distress," responded the schemer, speaking gravely. "From no other person would I endure the implied reproach. I give up my days, my nights, my thoughts, to the service of Roslyn, and in lieu of thanks I receive reproaches; still I desire none other. Let me but serve my unhappy and erring cousin, let me be of some slight service to his neglected wife, and I shall rest contented."

"You must indeed bear with me," responded Adine, "for my heart is oppressed, and my nerves are

unstrung. If I have said anything offensive, forgive it, and now let us go again into the house. I am impatient for the arrival of the doctor."

"We have not breakfasted either," responded Malvern, "let us go in and refresh ourselves."

They went in and partook of breakfast. Afterwards Adine again entreated that she might be permitted to enter the sick room of her husband.

"It is impossible!" cried Malvern. "You have no idea of his state; besides, he sleeps now, or I could not leave him."

"Let me at least look at him while he sleeps," cried Adine.

At this moment a hired carriage drove up to the front of the mansion.

"It is Sir Peter Carey," cried Adine, clasping her hands. "Now I shall know the worst."

Sir Peter Carey entered the breakfast-room, accompanied by an assistant-surgeon. Sir Peter was a tall, thin, eager-looking man, with scanty, dark hair, a fine brow, a clear eye, penetrating yet pitiful; but Adine read abstraction in his glance, that look which betokens a man who has given up his life to the contemplation of one idea. A few kind words, an entreaty to Lady Roslyn to calm herself, and then the two doctors went out of the room, accompanied by Vayle Malvern.

Adine watched breathlessly for their return, but it seemed to her that their consultation was long and dubious. She stole into the marble-pillared hall, and listened eagerly. Then she heard a door unlocked, but nobody appeared.

At last the slow-measured tread of Sir Peter Carey sounded on the velvet carpet of the staircase; in another moment he had stalked majestically into the apartment. He held his large plain gold watch in his hand, and his face was solemn and sad.

"Tell me," faltered Adine.

"Take a little wine; prepare yourself. Remember that your own life is most precious."

"Tell me," responded Adine; "do tell me at once!"

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

BRAIN-WORK.—The effects of the overstraining of the nervous system are thus described:—This excessive tension at which the mental faculties are kept for ten or eleven months of the year, in the vortex of city life, by the never-ending competition and struggle for pre-eminence in social and professional status, to which all who live by their wits or their talents are now subjected, produces a wear and tear of body and of mind, the ultimate result and *acmé* of which are premature old age. Its marks are easily discerned by the attentive observer. You may read them in the care-worn countenance, in the hair prematurely gray, in the lank and stooping figure, in the languid and feeble gait; and the physician also detects it in the habitual dyspepsia, in the disordered circulation, and in the degenerated and worn-out heart. The failing memory, the inability to fix the attention long upon any subject, and the irascible or desponding temper, mark the equal decadence of the mental *pari passu* with that of the physical powers.

THE CHEMISTRY OF SUNSTROKE.

The effects and the treatment of sunstroke are well understood. But the cause of the sunstroke is as yet a mystery. The intense heat (merely as heat) of the solar rays, is not the agent of mischief. The human body may be exposed to the Turkish bath of 140 deg., and remain in it for an hour without injury. This is a much higher range of heat than that of the atmosphere at which sunstroke often occurs, viz., from 100 deg. to 110 deg. (in the sun). Men working in zinc furnaces or iron foundries are subjected to a heat above 120 deg., but they are not prostrated to the ground with the phenomena of the sunstroke. The human organization is fitted to endure a much higher pitch of heat than any we have named. Experiments are recorded of men sitting quite comfortable in ovens while chickens were slowly browning by their side. How does it happen, then, that at a temperature of the open air, comparatively so low, men melt away (as the popular saying is) with heat?

A writer says, the reason must be looked for in the character of the sun's rays. The heat of the sun differs from every other heat, as the light of the sun differs from every other kind of light. This is a fact so well known as to need no demonstration. The effect of the sun's heat upon plants—as contrasted with artificial heat—is the most familiar, and, perhaps, the most striking illustration at hand. All animate and inanimate things are subject to precisely the same great laws of nature; and the solar heat which makes the flowers droop and close their petals, as if to shut out the dazzling rays, is not

without its marvellous chemical effect upon the sensitive brain of man. The effect, we say, is chemical—just like the effect of poison. Strychnine, cyanide of potassium, arsenic, morphine, and the other deadly drugs do not work more marked organic changes in the system than a sunstroke. The countenance of the victim is dark-coloured and injected with blood, and a *post mortem* examination discloses congestion of the brain, lungs, and heart. These are the effects, varying in degree, of the administration of poisons. The chances of recovery from poisoning are far better, if remedies are seasonably applied, than from sunstroke. The latter is almost always fatal with persons of delicate health or full habit.

As to remedies, there is no improvement on the old ones. The application of ice to the head and under the armpits, brandy and water, or other stimulants, administered internally, a mustard plaster on the stomach, vigorous chafing of the body and especially the hands and feet, fanning, and plenty of air—these are restoratives efficacious where anything is of avail.

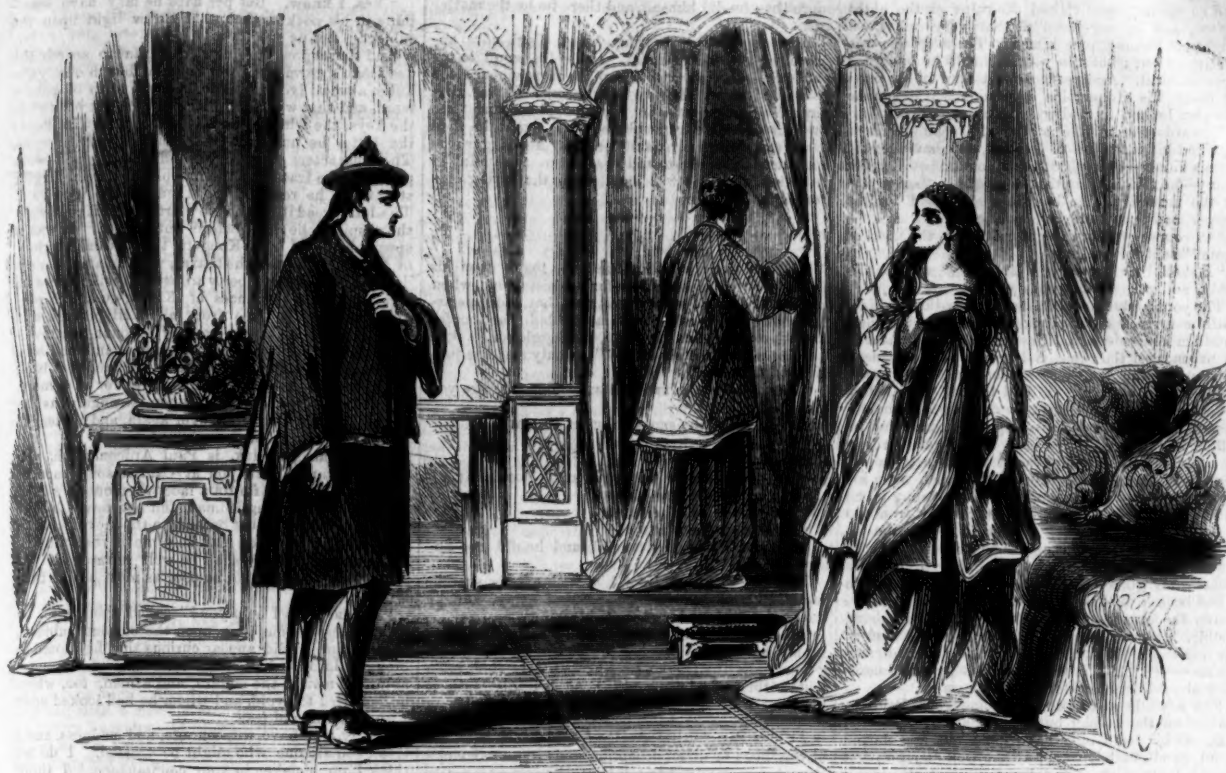
WRITING.

MANY a man's destiny has been made or marred for time and for eternity by the influence which a single sentiment has made on his mind, by its forming his character for life, making it terribly true, that moments sometimes fix the colouring of our whole subsequent existence. Hence those who write for the public should do so under a deep sense of responsibility, and endeavour to do it in that healthful and equitable state of mind and body which favours a clear, unexaggerated, and logical expression of ideas. If men wrote nothing for print until after forty, the world would be happier and better, for age and a more extensive and accurate observation, cause many a change of sentiment in later life. A clerical editor and friend published once, that a cup of tea was an admirable aid to the preaching of a sermon. We thought it a dangerous statement; later on we were called to see him; he had lost his mind. It might just as well have been advised to preach on a glass of brandy. The minister of our college days urged in the pulpit the advantage of saving spare moments, by having a book at hand to read while waiting at the table, or for an expected visitor; he became famed in both continents, but he lost his mind years before he died, at sixty. No one should write when very hungry, or immediately after eating, nor under the influence of any unnatural stimulant, nor while in a passion; else, in this latter case, he will most certainly make a fool of himself. Those who write under a depression of spirits will always write nonsense, or untrue things. Those who write a great deal late at night, will lose their health or die prematurely. The best time for writing with freshness, vigour, and logical truthfulness is in the morning, when the brain has been recuperated and renovated by the natural stimulus of healthful sleep, before its force has been expended or divided on the common affairs of life. No man ought to write over four hours in twenty-four, nor over one hour at a sitting; even oftener, it would be better to walk a few minutes, indoor or out, to rest the brain; but always write when the mind takes hold of the subject, when the spirit is on you, be it day or night.

In Morocco, when anybody is bitten by a mad dog, the wound is deepened and enlarged with a knife. Gunpowder is then rubbed into the sore, and a little pyramid is raised with the powder over it. A match is then applied, and the operation terminates with a fix, which has a double effect of cleansing the wound and stanching the blood.

CAPTURE OF A LOCUST.—As Mr. W. Elliott, gardener, Queensbury, near Halifax, was pursuing his occupation, he heard something flying near him, which he imagined to be a bird, but which proved to be a fine locust, and which he captured. Its body was fully two inches long, and its wings, when closed, extended half an inch beyond that measurement. Three or four years ago several locusts were caught in the neighbourhood, but none of them were half so large as the one just secured.

THE DISRAELIS.—Our Premier belongs to a very long-lived family. His mother and his grandmother both attained a good old age; his father, the author of "The Curiosities of Literature," died about five-and-twenty years ago, at the age of eighty-two; and his grandfather died in 1817, in his ninetieth year. The family became English denizens in 1748; and the present Prime Minister's grandfather (to use his own words) was an Italian descendant of one of those Hebrew families "whom the Inquisition forced to emigrate from the Spanish Peninsula at the end of the fifteenth century, and who found a refuge in the more tolerant territories of the Venetian Republic."



YU-LU.

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN Paul reached the dwellings he found them to be bamboo huts, thatched with coarse grass and strips of tallow-tree bark. They were dirty, filthy-looking places, but he selected the one that seemed the least objectionable, and having approached the door, he found it occupied by a middle-aged man, with his wife and four children. The family were just seated at their dinner as our hero entered, and the peasant at once arose and bade him welcome. Paul made his wants known, and at the same time expressed his desire to pay for all that he might receive.

The freedom and kindness of his reception nearly made up for the amount of dirt which he had to encounter, and without farther ceremony he sat down to the meal, which consisted of boiled rice, a boiled fowl, and some black bread, made from rice flour, sweetened with some dark syrup. Notwithstanding the amount of grease which defaced the table and the dishes, the youth ate heartily, for he was fortified by an excellent appetite. After the meal was finished the host lit his pipe, and Paul did the same, both seating themselves upon a rude bench that stood in front of the hut, under the broad, overhanging eaves.

"Are you from the north?" said the host, who had given his name as Lin-fou.

"From the north-west," returned our hero, seeing that Lin had no suspicions against him.

"I thought so. And your name—"

"Is Pan-ding," said Paul, smiling at the oddity of the assumed cognomen.

"How far have you come this day?"

"Only from the temples."

"Temples?" uttered Lin-fou, elevating his eyebrows. "What temples?"

"Why, those in the valley, to be sure."

"But you did not stop there last night?"

"Yes."

"You did not sleep there?"

"Yes."

"Not among the ruins?"

"Yes."

"Among those ruins?" pursued the host, taking his pipe from his mouth, and pointing down to the massive ruins from whence Paul had just come.

"Yes, I slept there last night. I got belated while examining them, and so made up my mind to stop there. Is there anything wonderful in that?"

"Wonderful!" uttered Lin, laying his hand upon

his head with a sort of reverential awe. "It's perfectly miraculous! You are the first man that has ever passed the night there and come forth alive!"

"But what is the mystery?" asked Paul, hoping that he might gain some insight into what he had witnessed.

"Did you not see anything strange there?" returned the host, speaking as one yet lost in astonishment.

"Yes; I saw that the great Buddha was overthrown and disgraced; and I saw that numerous gods and charms were scattered about in pleteous confusion. I wondered that the people did not take some of them home to their own houses."

"Heaven preserve us from such a fate!" piously ejaculated Lin-fou, again placing his hand upon the top of his head. "There is a curse upon that place, and upon all that is in it."

"I am ignorant, good Lin. Let me have the light. I have heard that the ruins are wonderful, but I know nothing more."

"Then you do not know why those temples are in ruins, and why the cold east wind blows so bleakly about their gods?"

"No. Tell me."

"I will. And you slept there! You must be smiled upon by the great eminence of heaven. But let me tell you, for I know it well. A great many years ago—many hundreds, I think—the people of Fou-tching-yo, Lin-tchou, and Teng-yuen, assisted by the emperor and his grandees, built those great temples. The largest was for Buddha, the next for Teoo-moo, the goddess of all things, and the third for Shing-moo, our holy mother. Time passed on, and the virtuous people came and worshipped in these temples, and they gave to the gods every thing that lay in their power. At length there was a great drought, and it cursed only this section. The people prayed to the gods upon their knees; they gave Teoo-moo and Shing-moo rare flowers and jewels, and to the great joss they gave a new clothing of gold and many valuable ornaments; but their prayers were not heard. The corn would not grow, and the sheep died upon the hills. Of course the people were angry; but they thought all this might be to punish them for their sins, and so through the whole of the next winter they fasted and prayed, and bestowed more attention than ever upon the offending gods. In the spring, the cold east winds came and nipped the fruit, and the whirlwind broke down the vines and the tallow-trees. The people were exasperated now, for they knew that their gods meant them harm instead of good, so they collected together, many thousands of them, tore

down the temples, and hurled the gods from their seats. The priests made no resistance, but helped in the work of destruction. After this was done the people went to their homes, and from that time they prospered; but they would not build up the temples again. That is why these ruins are in the valley."

It was a strange tale; but Paul did not wonder at it, for he knew that it was characteristic of the Chinese people. Only a few months before, he had seen a huge gilded idol dragged through the mud at Amoy, because it had not answered the prayers of the people; but in this case the people prospered soon afterwards, and then the idol was not only restored to its place, but it was re-gilded, new ornaments placed upon it, and then the people rolled in the dust at his feet, and implored his forgiveness.

"But where is the danger of now visiting the place?" asked our hero, after he had pondered a while upon what he had heard.

"Why," returned the peasant, with a slight shudder, "it seems that the disgraced gods try to wreak their vengeance upon all whom they can lay hold of. They have no influence beyond the limits of their ruined houses; but they must have power there, or they have called the dark spirits to their aid. Unfortunate travellers who have stopped there, have been found dead in the morning; and then the most strange noises are sometimes heard. The prince of Nankin long since issued an edict, that no one should attempt to pass the night near the ruins."

"But why did he do so?"

"To save the lives of his people."

"And how long is it since the edict was passed?"

"About two years."

"Is there any penalty attached?"

"There is no need of penalty, for death is sure to follow."

"And yet I am not dead," said Paul.

The peasant looked up, and shook his head dubiously.

"I don't know," he at length said, "how you escaped. The gods may have been asleep, or the dark spirit may have been away upon some errand among wicked people. I would not sleep there for all the gold and precious stones upon the imperial joss!"

Paul could not but smile at the poor peasant's superstitious earnestness; but he took good care that his smile should not be seen. But then the desire to smile soon passed away, for a strange crowd of surmises and suspicions had begun to pass through his mind. He remembered well the gaudy dress and jewels he had seen beneath the dark robe of him who

had so mysteriously visited the ruins on the night before, and he wondered if that very individual might not be the prince himself. The suspicion was a strange one; but the youth thought he had good grounds for it. And yet it did not tend in the least to damp his ardour; his determination to pursue the plan he had formed was as strong as ever.

Towards the middle of the afternoon our hero signified his intention of leaving, and having paid for his dinner—only about the amount of an English penny—he told Lin-fou that he might be there again on the next day. He bought some bread for his supper, and then he turned to depart.

"Of course you won't venture among the temples again?" said the peasant.

"I shall be more careful in future," was Paul's reply, and with that he set out.

The young adventurer followed along the hill-side, until he arrived at a point opposite to the temples, and then he descended. Until evening he wandered about amongst the ruins, and as soon as it was dark he crept to the same place where he had slept the night before, and then he laid himself down. For several hours he remained awake to watch the pedestal, but gradually sleep overpowered him, and he fell off into a doze. How long he had remained so, he could not tell, but he was at length aroused by that same low, grating sound. He struck upon his ears with a quickening power, and on starting up he could just discern a human head thrust out from the aperture in the pedestal. It was not the one he had seen on the previous night; he was sure of that; for his head was bare and wholly shaved, and the moonbeams glistened upon the bald pate, as though it had been a ball of polished metal. Shortly afterwards the owner of the head made his whole body visible. It was a large stout body, and clothed in the garb of a priest of Buddha. After he had come up, he closed the aperture, and, having gazed carefully about him, he walked quietly away.

For a while after the priest had gone, Paul remained on the watch; but sleep again overpowered him. If he could only have gone out and moved about, he might have kept awake well enough; but he dared not venture out, lest the priest should return unexpectedly upon him, and thus, perhaps, upset his whole plan. But he was not destined to sleep long, for approaching footsteps soon aroused him, and under the excitement of a dreamy phantasy that was just working in his mind, he started to his feet more quickly than he would otherwise have done. And that movement was nearly costing him his life, for the stout priest saw him, and turned quickly towards him.

"Ha, ha!" uttered the bald-headed bonze, starting back a pace; "you are the cause of all this thumping and bumping. Now the angry gods be revenged upon you for thus desecrating their shattered abode!"

As the bonze spoke, he raised a heavy club of iron-wood which he carried, and sprang forward; but the moment of time that intervened between his discovery and the raising of the club had given Paul opportunity for clear thought. He remembered what the peasant had told him about the finding of dead travellers in the temple, and he now thought he had found what made them die. With this conviction he had instinctively drawn a pistol from his bosom, and had just cocked it as the bonze started to spring upon him. It was the instinct of self-preservation that made him raise his weapon, and just as the ponderous club was raised above his head he fired. He avoided the blow, and sprang back. The priest uttered a quick cry, and raised his club again, but he struck wildly and at random. Once or twice he raised the club; then it dropped from his hand, and with a deep groan he staggered towards the pedestal, but he did not reach it. He stretched out both his hands, as though he would have clasped the massive rock for support, and with one more groan he sank down, or rather fell forward, upon the stone pavement.

Paul left his place, and hastened forward. He stooped down and turned the body of the fallen man over; but there was no life in it. The moon shone full upon the spot, and the youth could see that the ball had entered the left breast, and perhaps touched the heart.

This was a position which our hero had not looked for, and for a while he hardly knew how to act. But it soon occurred to him that he had better, for the present at least, hide the body, and taking it by the feet, he dragged it away between two massive fragments of wall, and there covered it with the old rubbish that lay around. He felt really sorry that he had killed the man, but the thought that the deed was necessary to save his own life eased his conscience; and then, perhaps, he had revenged the death of many an innocent traveller, who had unsuspectingly sought the shelter of the ruins. At all events, he thought that the bonze deserved death

more than he did himself, and there he let the matter rest.

With a strongly-beating heart, Paul now approached the old pedestal. He had a mind to try and gain admittance to the place from whence the bonze had come. It was venturesome—it was, perhaps, foolhardy; but the youth could not turn from the purpose. He remembered the signal he had heard the visitor give, and he drew his dagger; he had turned the haft, and was upon the point of knocking, when he was startled by the laying of a hand upon his arm.

CHAPTER V.

On the instant that Paul felt the touch upon his arm he started up, and drew forth a pistol; but when he had turned and seen who it was that had thus arrested him, he recoiled with a startled emotion, for it was no other than Ye-fu-hi, the juggler of Nankin.

"You would not shoot me?" calmly said the juggler, with a smile.

"Not if you mean me no harm. But why are you here?"

"I would ask the same question of you."

"I came to see these ruins."

"So did I."

"But you choose a strange hour for your visit."

"I thought the same of you."

"But I sleep here."

"Were you asleep now?"

Paul found himself detected, and he did not answer.

The juggler looked upon him with a keen, searching glance. The smile had passed away, and he seemed now earnest and thoughtful.

"I heard the report of a pistol a few moments since," he resumed, seeing the youth did not speak. "What was the trouble? Ah! What is this upon which the moonbeams shine so brightly? Is it blood? Why is this? Do not fear to tell me, if you know."

At first Paul hesitated. He feared to try his hand at falsehood or direct deception, and after a moment's thought, he resolved to tell the thing just as it really happened.

"I wandered about among the ruins during most of the day that has just passed," he said, "and at night I laid me down behind those stones to sleep. How long I had slept I know not, but I was awakened by the approach of footsteps, and on starting to my feet beheld a stout man close to me. He saw me at the same moment, and sprang upon me with a club—that is the club, there. I drew my pistol and shot him."

The juggler stooped down and picked up the club, which had dropped near the pedestal, and his face kindled as he examined it.

"This was made on purpose for killing men," he said, as he turned the weapon over in his hand, "and I think there is hair upon it, too. But did the fellow give you no reason for his onset?"

"He only said that the angry gods should be revenged upon me for desecrating their shattered abode."

"This, then, is the secret of the deaths that have occurred here," said the juggler, speaking half to himself; and then looking up, he added, "The people fear these ruins, and allow them to lie in quiet. Perhaps you know the story?"

"Yes; an old peasant on the hill told me."

"And did you venture to sleep here after that?"

"I treated the matter only as an idle superstition."

"And yet you see there was truth in it."

"Something of truth."

"Ay, much of truth, for many people have lost their lives here. But where is the body of him you shot?"

"I dragged it to a place out yonder, and covered it up."

"I would see it. You have nothing to fear from me. Come."

Paul could not resist the beck of the strange man. He did not fear him now, and yet he wished he had not come. He had an instinctive feeling that it would be better to trust him, and yet he would have given much to have kept the whole matter to himself. But with what the juggler already knew, it could do no harm to show him the body; so the youth led the way to the place where it had been concealed, and threw aside the rubbish that covered it; then they both dragged the corpse out into the moonlight.

"I have seen that fellow before," said Ye-fu-hi, stooping down and gazing intently into the dead man's face. "I have seen him in Nankin, and twice have I tried to track him; but both times I lost him. I wish I had known him better before you sent that lead through his body."

"I did it in self-defence," replied Paul. "I had no choice in the matter."

"Yes, I know. But perhaps he may have something in his pockets that will throw light upon the subject. Let us see."

And thereupon the juggler began to search the dead man's garments. He found a bunch of keys, a knife, a small ivory whistle, a small strip of parchment, and that was all. The knife he put back; but the keys, the whistle, and the parchment he kept; the latter he unrolled, and found it written upon. The characters were bold and heavy, and were plainly to be traced by the moonlight. The juggler started as he read it, and then handed it to Paul. The latter read it, and he too started—for it confirmed the suspicion he had before entertained. It was a special passport from Kong-ti, the powerful prince of Nankin, and gave the bearer, whose name was set down as Fan-king, liberty to pass at will where he pleased in the provinces of Ki-ang-su and Ngan-hoet, even to be free from all civil process, and exempt from all arrest on any account whatever. This was signed by the prince's own hand, and bore his seal. After Paul had read it, he handed it back to the juggler, and the latter read it over once more. His features were worked upon strangely as he traced the bold characters over again, and at length he turned towards our hero.

"Your name, I think, is Paul Ardeen. Oh, you need not start. I saw you at Canton some months since, and I seldom forget a face when once I see it. Now, you are an Englishman, and not moved by the petty superstitions that enter into the movements of my countrymen. You may help me if you will, and I assure you that you shall be well rewarded if you do so. Ye-fu-hi is not so poor as most people take him for."

"But how can I help you?" asked Paul, after he had pondered some time upon the curious subject; for to him it did appear curious that he should be brought into such contact with one of the most notorious men in the empire, and a man, too, whom he had tried to avoid, and whom he had looked upon with something of fear.

"Why, you have wit, courage, and coolness, and I think you are one who might be trusted. I do not think I am mistaken in your countenance. I think the Prince Kong-ti must have a haunt about here somewhere, and I would find out where it is. If you would watch, keep your eyes about this vicinity, and see what movements are made, I think you may learn something."

"But what shall it profit me? I am not so fond of running my neck to the block."

"Oh, if you fear, then we will say no more about it. I thought you were fond of adventure, and fond, too, perhaps of hunting up and solving mysteries."

"I do not fear, sir," returned Paul, with a flush upon his face. "But my life was not given me to throw needlessly away. But yes, perhaps, I may do as you wish, for I should really like to know why that fellow attacked me."

"Oh, I wish you would help me," pursued the juggler, evincing much earnestness. "The prince has done me a most foul wrong, and I would have my hand upon him. I feel sure that he haunts this place; but I cannot remain here now. I must away to Nankin. If you will but stop here and watch—perhaps one more night, perhaps a week, perhaps more—you may see the prince about here."

"But how shall I know him?" asked Paul, who was all the while considering deeply upon the subject.

"You may know him by his very bearing. He is a man about forty years of age, somewhat taller than yourself, and corpulent. His skin is lighter than yours—for he was born in the extreme north of the empire. He is our emperor's youngest brother. You will surely know him if you see him, and if he comes disguised, I think you will easily see through it. I ask you to do this, for I do not know an available man of my own people who would dare to do it. What say you?"

Paul was now sure that the man whom he had seen enter the ruins on the previous night was no other than the prince; but he did not mean that the juggler should know how much of a clue he had. He revolved the matter over; he had determined to explore the mystic place beneath the ruins, and why should he hesitate now? In fact, the presence of the juggler had given him a new incentive to explore it, for he felt far less fear of the consequences. If harm should happen to him there would now be one who would know where he was. There is a vast difference between being alone in an adventure and having a companion, even though that companion be but a confident and sympathizer, without direct personal companionship. These kind of thoughts came across Paul's mind, and at length he replied that he would make the trial.

"You know not, sir," exclaimed Ye-fu-hi, with much gratitude in his manner, "how you have pleased me in this. I do not think there will be much dan-

ger. I have long needed a stout arm and a resolute heart to help me, but among my people I could find them not. You shall remain here, and among the honest peasants you will find sustenance. Oh, if I can but once get upon the track of the prince, I shall be content. Watch for him—watch for him. This man was his tool, and when he finds him gone, he may come to seek him."

"Suppose you let me have those keys and that whistle," said Paul. "Who knows but they may be useful? That whistle may be for the giving of some secret signal, and the keys may be also used. At least they may serve me better than yourself."

"So they may," returned the old man, passing the articles over without even a thought, except to comply with the youth's wishes.

After this the body of the bonze was dragged back to its hiding-place, and then the two walked out into the court. When they stopped, the juggler laid his hand upon Paul's arm, and with more emotion than he had before betrayed, he said:

"I must leave you now, for I have business that must be done. I heard that the prince had left Nankin, that he had taken this path, and hence I followed; but I cannot stop now to look for him. You will not deceive me—you will not neglect the work. I trust you—I put all confidence in you, and in the end you shall own that I have not done you wrong; but you shall find that I have a power to make you happy. Believe me! oh, believe me! I will bless you with earth's sweetest blessings, and I will help to open heaven to your feet."

Paul Ardeen stood like one entranced. The words he had heard were not so powerful in themselves, but there was something in the speech that affected him wondrously. It was something aside from the tone—more than the mere language; it was something that did not belong to the sounds he had heard, and yet it was a power that came from the man before him. He gazed up into the juggler's face, and with a most searching look did he scrutinise every lineament of those dark features. Why he did so he knew not; he only felt that his soul was struggling to leap forth into some knowledge that was not yet his—that he was the plaything of a double mystery. He did not reply, and ere long the old man continued:

"I shall be here again in one week. Shall I find you here then?"

"If I am alive—yes."

"Then heaven protect you! I must be within the walls of Fou-tching-yo before the sun is up. As you love yourself, do not deceive me—do not neglect me. In one week, if I am alive, I shall be here, and perhaps before."

And thus speaking the strange man turned and walked swiftly away. Paul watched him as he passed down the valley, nor did he move until the departing form was lost in the gloomy shadows of the distance.

CHAPTER VI.

Soon after the juggler had gone Paul began to think intently of the plan he had in view. As near as he could judge by the moon, it was an hour past midnight. There was but a few hours left to him before it would be daylight, and he considered some time before he could make up his mind; but when he had done so, he resolved to make the venture. He re-loaded the barrel of the pistol he had discharged, and having seen that the other barrels were safe he went once more to the pedestal. He drew his dagger, and with its haft he knocked smartly upon the stone. It produced a sharp, ringing sound, and ere long he heard a knock from the inside. He remembered the whistle which he had heard given by the man whom he knew now to be the prince, and he thought of the little ivory instrument he had obtained from the pocket of the bonze. He drew it out and blew upon it, sharply and shrilly, as he had heard the prince do, and in a moment more a portion of the rock seemed to sink away. Within he saw a middle-aged woman who bore a lighted candle in her hand, but she did not look particularly at him. She only seemed to observe that the one who had summoned her was ready to come in, and then she started down.

Paul hesitated a moment, and during that time there seemed a thousand thoughts rushing through his mind; but his courage was good, and he stepped in through the aperture. Here a new difficulty presented itself.

By the light of the candle which the woman carried, he could see that the way led down a long flight of stone steps, and she was nearly half way down. How was he to shut the aperture up? He looked behind him, and all around, but he could see nothing that seemed made for that purpose. The woman had stopped and looked back, and with a sudden thought Paul put his head out through the

opening, as though he were looking to see that all was safe.

This gave him time for thought. He remembered that the moveable part of the rock had sank down, and, of course, it must be lifted up again. Perhaps it was so hung that it would lift up easily. Upon this reflection he drew in his head, and reached down. He felt a ring, which he seized, and lifted with all his might, but he had no need to have laid out half the strength, for the rock came up easily, and slid into its place with a sharp click.

As soon as the woman saw that the place was shut she turned and pursued her way down again, not having noticed, in the gloom of the place, who it was that followed. One thought now came to our hero's mind which made him feel comparatively safe. If there had been a man in the place he would certainly have come to open the passage. This circumstance gave the youth new courage, and he followed on with less hesitation. At the foot of the stairs he came to a narrow, vaulted passage, through which the woman walked without turning, and Paul kept far enough behind to be in the gloom. After following around a gentle curve, she opened a door to the left and passed through, but even here she did not stop for her follower to overtake her. When Paul passed in at this door he saw that the woman had already opened another, through the opening of which came a stream of rich, mellow light, and through this opening she disappeared. The youth followed on, and when he had passed the second door, he found himself in a large apartment, and he saw his guide just disappearing behind a heavy silken arras that hung in one corner of the place. He stopped and gazed about him, and for a while he was fairly bewildered by the scene which was thus opened to his view. The room was spacious, and adorned with every luxury that wealth could afford. From the centre of the arched ceiling hung a cluster of crystal lanterns, the soft beams from which bathed the place in a flood of light almost equal to noon-day. Upon a rich couch, at one end of the apartment, reclined the form of a female. At first she did not notice who had entered, but gradually she turned her eyes towards the door, and as she met the gaze of our hero she started to her feet.

"This is not Fan-king!" she uttered, almost in a whisper.

"No, lady," quickly returned Paul, "I have come in Fan-king's place."

The youth spoke so calmly, and his answer was so frank, that the female seemed to be at once disarmed of all fear, and Paul had an opportunity to view her. Never before had he seen a being so lovely. She could not have been more than twenty years of age, and it really seemed as though every hour of her life had added some new charm to her person. Her skin was as fair as the new-blown lily, and upon her cheeks dwelt the blush of the newly-opened rose. Her hair was as black as the sparkling jet, and its clustered curls hung freely over her faultless neck and shoulders. Her eyes, which were large, dark and brilliant, were shaded by long silken lashes, and her brow, upon which rested a diadem of pearls, was clear and frank. Her form was light and airy, for her dress was not like that worn generally by her countrywomen. But had her form been enveloped in the garb of a bonze, it could not have detracted from the beauty of her face—that was a sphere of its own, in which loveliness reigned supreme.

"Did the prince send you here?" asked the girl, slightly lowering her eyes before the enraptured gaze of the youth.

"May I sit down and tell you my errand?" asked Paul, after a few moments' hesitation.

The girl did not hesitate in her answer, nor did she exhibit the least fear, though it must be confessed that she showed much surprise.

"Of course I have nothing to fear," she said. "You have a right here, or you would not be here. Let me know why you are come?"

(To be continued.)

A MONUMENT to Alexander the Third, of Scotland, is to be erected on the King's Rock, Burntisland, Fifeshire.

EARLY CRYPT, ANGERS.—In digging for the proposed new theatre at Angers, M. Armand Parrot, secretary to the Société Académique of the department of the Maine-et-Loire, and intrusted with the superintendence of the excavations, has had the good fortune to discover the Gallo-Roman chapel in which the first bishops of Anjou used to officiate and preach to the pagans who had recently embraced the Christian religion. This little temple was, therefore, the cradle of Christianity in that province. Two other crypts of different periods have likewise been found, which present some curious architectural details. One of them, called after St. René, contains a large number of very fine sarcophagi of various shapes.

Some of them belong to the Merovingian period, and consist of magnificent monoliths, in the interior of which skeletons, in a perfect state of preservation, have been discovered.

THE MAD PHILOSOPHER.

I HAD been forced to confess to my wife, on that very morning, that I was alarmed; and she had once more urged it upon me that I should return to our Auckland home; or, at all events that I should seek a settlement among civilized people, where she and our children could enjoy a few of the blessings of Christian society. But I had told her to wait.

I had been settled in Waikato not quite a year. In looking out a favourable location for one of my profession, I had been governed by a consideration which my wife at first bitterly opposed. Instead of seeking a populous place, I looked about for a place which should give signs of future growth, meaning there to cast my lines, and grow up with it. And Waikato was such a place. With one of the best water-powers in the country; a pleasant location; a salubrious climate, soil of surpassing richness; upon the edge of a vast belt of the grandest timber that grew, the place could not but thrive. I had seen how other towns had grown up, and I felt sure that Waikato would increase likewise; and with that conviction upon me I settled down in the infant town, and notified to the inhabitants that when they were ill I would minister to them.

And now I can tell you why, on this morning, I had so flatly refused to leave the place. Within the eleven months that I had spent there the population had more than doubled; two new mills had been put up; a wealthy party was negotiating for the building of a flour-mill; and at least a score of dwellings—poor ones, indeed, but nevertheless affording houses for honest men and women—had been erected. And then I was getting a practice; and, what was more, the people seemed to respect and trust me. I had not yet built a dwelling. When I removed to Waikato I had money enough to buy a fine piece of land, but not enough with which to add a house; so my wife and I concluded that we would hire a small tenement, until I was able to put up such a dwelling as would suit us.

I sat down and took up the paper, and again I read the article which had been the occasion of our discussion.

Another physician murdered! Dear reader, do you remember the event? It is a time five-and-thirty years ago of which I write. Within less than four weeks five physicians had been murdered, and as yet no clue had been obtained to the murderer. They had all been shot. Two had been killed in their houses; one had been killed in a kitchen where he was eating alone at a table, having come home late at night, after the family had retired; one had been shot on the highway, while returning on foot from a professional visit; and the last had been murdered in his bed.

This last victim, an account of whose death was in the paper before me, was Doctor Cornelius Verplank, a young man, of about my own age, only ten miles distance from Waikato. He had been found in the morning, by a servant who had gone to call him to see a patient, dead in his bed, with a bullet hole in his temple.

What could it mean? At first the supposition had been that these men had been murdered for their money; but two, at least, of the victims had no money, and the fourth—he who had been shot on the highway—had been left with a gold watch, and a purse of money in his pocket; so, of course, plunder could not have been the object. But a hundred men were on the search—every civil officer in the country, together with many volunteers—and we hoped that the search might be successful. What clue the officers might have I did not know, though I supposed they must have gained something in the way of a guiding fact from so many bold and daring murders, especially since it was evident that they were all committed by one and the same person.

Who can wonder that I had begun to feel alarmed? A destroyer was on the track, and his course was towards myself. The map showed it plainly. First, Doctor Willerton, sixty miles away. Next, Doctor Allen, fifty miles away. Then fell my friend, John Howard, only thirty miles distant. And the scene of the last murder was only ten miles away! Yes, I was alarmed; and I had reason for it. There was method in the destruction of physicians; and the hand that struck Doctor Verplank might next strike Dionysius Condylye. Why not? At all events, I owed it to myself to be prepared for an emergency; and first I sought to provide myself with a brace of good pistols. I could not well afford to buy such a pair as I wanted just then; but I knew where I could borrow them; and I had arisen for the pur-

pose of going out upon this errand, when the door of my office was unceremoniously opened, and a stranger entered.

"Good day, sir."

"Ah, good day. This is Doctor Condyle?"
I told him I was the individual, and at the same time offered him a chair. The chair, as I placed it, was at the end of my table; but he moved it around towards the door. It did not strike me then that he was placing himself between me and the door; but I had occasion to think of it afterwards.

The new-comer was a middle-aged man; not very tall, nor was he exceedingly stout, and yet he struck me as being the most powerfully muscular man I had ever seen. The surpassingly-developed deltoids gave immense breadth to the shoulders, while the pectorals, correspondingly developed, gave fullness to one of those chests which can never be mistaken for weak ones. In short, he was a compact mass of bone and muscle, most surprisingly developed, even to the ends of his fingers. His head was large—very large—the frontal region being of uncommon fulness, and the upper portion, where phrenologists locate firmness and reverence, was remarkably high. The top of the head was entirely bald, and the skin had a thin, smooth, transparent look, as though the skull beneath had swelled almost to bursting it. The hair which grew above the ears and floated down over the shoulders, was of exceeding fineness, slightly inclined to curl, and of a dark-brown colour, untouched with gray. His beard was full and long; the cheek-bones prominent; the nose like an eagle's beak; and the eyes large, bright, and piercing. In fact, there was a brightness in those eyes entirely unnatural; and when he gazed full into my face I shuddered in spite of myself. About the man's dress there was nothing unusual, except that the shirt-collar was broad, and turned back over the collar of the coat, leaving it bare.

The most noticeable thing about him was the cane, or walking-staff, which he carried, and which he kept in his hand when he sat down. It was very large, and apparently heavy, the lower two-thirds being straight and round, while the upper third was twisted and bent, with two or three enormous knobs on its sides, the whole being surmounted by a heavy cross-bar which served for a handle. At a little distance this staff appeared to be only one of those crazy, fantastic growths which are sometimes found in thick-tangled wildwood; but upon nearer view it was found to be a thing of art. The hand of man, with much labour, had fashioned it, and I resolved to know what that staff had been made for, before my visitor left. Or, at any rate, I meant to ask.

I told the man that my name was Condyle, and I expected then that he would make known his business; but instead thereof he examined my person from top to toe, and then looked up at the bottles and boxes which contained my medicines—for you must understand that we had no druggists at hand in that portion of the town; and the necessity of keeping a stock of medicines and chemicals was one of the chief things that had prevented my building a dwelling.

"My dear sir," said I, while he was still looking at the medicine-cases, "you have the advantage of me."

And I smiled and nodded.

"Eh?" said he, not seeming to comprehend.

"Your name," said I. "I do not know it."

He looked at me with a look that puzzled me, because it had a volume of meaning which I could not understand.

"I have no objection to telling you my name. You have heard of Pythagoras?"

I was not fully sure that the man was crazy, though it certainly looked very much like it; so I smilingly answered:

"I remember to have heard of but one Pythagoras."

"And who and what was he?" demanded my visitor.

"He was," said I, "the old philosopher of Samos; the first Greek, I believe, who claimed to be a philosopher; and he was the founder of the first strictly secret society of which we have any positive record—a society which he founded in Italy, if I remember rightly."

"Your memory serves you very well, young man," said my strange visitor, a little rigidly. "And now," he added, with a condescending smile, "I will enlighten you. I am Pythagoras!"

"Are you really that old Greek philosopher?" I asked.

"I am," he replied, solemnly. "You may wonder, and you may find it hard to believe, but if you possessed even a grain of my knowledge, you would not be surprised at all."

He spoke with the earnestness of perfect sincerity, and I knew that he was crazy; but I did not really fear

him. He was evidently an educated man, and I had a curiosity to see what direction his madness would take. Of one thing, however, I was fully aware—and a blessed thing for me it was that I possessed this knowledge of human nature under its different phases: I knew if my philosopher were really mad, that I must fall in with his vagaries, and not cross him in the least. Acting upon this understanding, I said:

"What you say, sir, does not surprise me so much as it interests me. But you will pardon me if I ask you with all solemnity, Are you, really and truly, Pythagoras of Samos—the disciple of Pherecydes of Syros, and also of Thales and Anaximander?"

"I am Pythagoras," he answered, with a seriousness which left no room for doubt, "and though I cannot deny that I was once a dependent upon the vast learning of the sages whom you have mentioned, yet I so far outstripped them in philosophical lore that it sounds almost impious to hear myself mentioned as their disciple."

Fully assured now that my visitor was mad, I determined to humour him to the extent of my power.

"I would like to know how your body has been preserved so long," said I, "and also how it happened that I have never heard of your being alive before. I should have supposed that your presence on earth would have been the theme of universal comment among learned men."

"My son," he replied, with a light laugh, "the substance of your second question is an answer to your first. Do you remember what was the distinguishing doctrine of my philosophy?"

"Yes," said I; "it was the doctrine of metempsychosis."

"Exactly," said he. "And by my presence here you have a clear demonstration of the truth of that philosophy. The transmigration of souls is as clearly a fixed fact as is the existence of matter. So you will see that I have not been moving about the earth in this same body all the while. When I left my first body at Metapontum, I passed into the form of a goat, and for eight years I wandered among the Apennines. Next I went into the body of an eagle, where I remained twenty years. And so I have lived on, having, during the hundreds of years since my soul first knew life, inhabited nearly every form of animal organism under the sun. The last was that of a tiger. I was hunted down by a party of *Shikarees* in an Indian jungle, on the banks of the Ganges, and captured; and after being exhibited five years, I passed out from the body of the tiger, and found myself once more in human form."

I asked my visitor if he expected to go back into the form of a beast again.

"Yes," said he; "and that transmigration of souls will go on, until these human forms of ours become perfect."

I did not quite understand, and asked him to explain.

"Here it is," he said, darting at me a look that thrilled to my heart. "Nature is trying to perfect the human form. The body of man was first made coarse and strong, of the same texture as the bodies of brutes; but, in time, they came to be finer and finer. I'll tell you what it is," he cried, stamping his foot, and looking at me with an expression that made me quiver; "don't you think the Infinite One knows when these human frames have been in use long enough, and when they should be laid away for a renewed growth? Do you not know, sir, that bodies buried in the earth only moulder to spring up into new and purer forms? I saw a small dog just above here as I came along. If that dog could speak, he would answer your question, and he would tell you that it would have been better for him had he been born a dog in the first place. Did you know Doctor Cornelius Verplank?"

"Yes, sir, he was a friend of mine."

"The soul that once animated the body of Cornelius Verplank now gives life to the body of that dog; and he will no more interfere with the infinite will."

"He!" I gasped.

"Ay—he!" pronounced the madman, now looking perfectly terrible. "When this poor human form began to droop and fade, why did he put forth his hand and seek to stay the work of transmigration?"

"But," I ventured, "you would not object to physicians saving the lives, or preserving the forms, of little children?"

"What do you mean?" roared the madman. "Who saves the forms of children? When the spirit comes to call the soul of the child to some new form, that the beautiful body may be laid away in the earth, to await the coming of the perfect day, you interfere, and, by your arts, defeat the spirit, and retain the body here, to grow old, ugly, and deformed! Sit still!" he commanded, as I began to move. "If you leave your seat you are a dead man!"

I could not move. The man glared upon me with a fire blazing in those eyes that burned into my very soul, and for the moment an overwhelming flood of fear and dread rendered me utterly powerless. I had no doubt that this was the man who had murdered the five physicians; and he had now come to kill me.

"Mind you," he went on, after I had sunk back into my seat, "in hastening the dissolution of your mortal body I do no murder. I only send your soul into some other form a little in advance of its time. But you cannot be permitted to remain here longer. I was sent back into this human body for the special work of destroying the whole race of physicians from off the face of the earth. But you need not fear, sir. You will experience no pain. I shall send a leaden ball directly through your brain, so that you will feel no hurt. Within the chambers of this gun is compressed as much atmospheric air as would fill two rooms like this in which we sit. It is wonderful, sir. There will be no report—no sound of any kind. Upon my soul, you ought to thank me—you had, indeed. I thus save you all the pain of dying, and perhaps in an hour from this time you may be a free and happy bird, sailing over the forests and prairies. Oh! I was very happy when I was a bird. I was in Africa then—"

At this point I broke in upon him. I had become as calm as ice, and as rigid. I had seen it all. That monstrous staff was a curiously constructed air-gun, and I knew from the way in which he held it that it was ready for discharging. He had only to touch the trigger to do it. And I knew, too, that any motion on my part would be fatal, for that gun could be pointed and discharged in the fourth part of a second. My life was the prize, and my wits worked smartly. I called to mind all that I had learned of insanity during my study, and in my reading since; and my course of action was quickly resolved upon. Luckily my nerves were steady, and luckily, too, I had faith in the result. My madman was a philosopher, and he had probably entered into a discussion with me, which he had not granted to the others. If he thought I had no wish to escape, he would probably listen to anything that promised light in his peculiar fancies. I broke in upon him by gently raising my hand towards him, and saying, with a smile:

"My dear Pythagoras, let me interrupt you one moment. But first answer me one question, and answer me truly: Must I die?"

"What men call dying—yes," he said, relaxing from his fierceness, and regarding me with a curious look.

"Then," I continued, leaning towards him, and speaking as calmly and interestedly as ever I spoke in my life—for a power outside and above my own seemed to sustain me, "listen to me. I have something of the utmost importance to communicate. Have you ever read the great work of the Abbé Geoffroy de Saint-Dizier, on the subject of the transmigration of souls?"

"No," said he, reflecting, "I never heard the name."

"He was a French philosopher and writer," I explained, "and I am very sure that he offered it as a source of consolation to parents who had lost young children, that the angels wanted children in heaven."

"Exactly," cried the madman, his face brightening. "That is the true philosophy."

"But," said I, "that is not all. He professes to have discovered how a man, at the point of dissolution, can elect what sort of a body his spirit shall next inhabit. The thing is simple, and I remember that it struck me as being very sensible."

"But that is a valuable discovery," cried my visitor, eagerly.

"It appears to me to be of incalculable value," I returned.

"Have you the work now?" he asked.

"Yes," I told him. "It is in my library."

"Where?"

"Directly over your head, sir?"

"My soul! we will look it over. Will you get it?"

Upon the broad shelf above the books were a number of heavy surgical instruments, and with them was a large iron monkey-wrench. I moved my chair to the book-case, stood upon it, and the madman arose and came up by my side. I had not counted upon his getting up; but I quickly saw my chance. Upon my table was a small feather duster.

"My dear Pythagoras," said I, "the dust is so thick upon these books that I can hardly read their titles. Will you hand me that duster on my table?"

He turned, and on the instant I grasped the iron wrench and leaped down upon him. I was not particular where I struck, nor how—not particular as to care for him, I mean. I only thought of my own life, and made sure that the blow would settle him. And it did. I struck him full upon the enormous bump of veneration with the flat side of the head of

the wrench, and he fell to the floor like a dead man. Quick as thought I was by his side, and having rolled him over upon his face, I brought his arms together behind his back, and there lashed them with a stout piece of packing-cord, which chanced to be at hand.

My next movement was to seize his staff and rush out of doors, where I soon succeeded in calling together half a dozen of my friends, and as we returned to my office I briefly told them the story of my adventure.

We found the philosopher still insensible; but a copious application of cold water soon brought him back to consciousness, and when he realized that he was captured, and that his secret was gone from him, and that the air-gun was to be his no more, he groaned and wept in agony. I had expected to see him rave and tear, but he did no such thing; nor did he rave at all during all the time I was with him. He seemed only sad and disheartened that he could not carry out his work.

The people, when they knew that we had caught the murderer of the physicians, were for lynching him; and they would certainly have done it, if I had not made them understand that he was a poor maniac, wholly irresponsible for his acts.

Touching his real name, or whence he came, we could only get from him that his name was Pythagoras, and that only a few months before he had worn the form of a Bengal tiger. But we had advertised him, and in the course of a few weeks three gentlemen arrived, and recognized my mad philosopher as a Mr. Payson Armitage, who had escaped from their asylum three months before, where he had originally been confined on account of this same dreadful hallucination. The first development of his mania had been the manufacture of his air-gun, though no one imagined what his plan was until it was finished, and he had confidentially let out the secret to his wife. At that time he was placed under restraint before he had done any mischief.

Armitage had been in confinement about six months when he made his escape. He had gone to his old home at night, and worked his way into the house without disturbing any of the inmates, and having secured his air-gun, he had stolen out, and made off.

Six months subsequent to my adventure I learned that Payson Armitage was dead. He had died of brain fever. It is not impossible that my hand helped that fever on, though there was plenty of other cause, in the character and directions of his mental disease.

The air-gun is still mine, and a wonderful piece of mechanism it is; and very peculiar are the reflections which occupy my thoughts when I take it out from its resting-place to exhibit it to my friends.

S. C. J.

MICHEL-DEVER.

CHAPTER LIII.

CLAIRE regarded Madame Laroche with astonishment. She coldly said:

"You have advocated the baron's cause zealously enough, but I am a loss to understand you."

"And to speak frankly, I am equally at a loss to find words to explain our anomalous position. The baron is a semi-barbarian after all, but I liked him well enough to put up with him, in consideration of the position to which he can elevate me. He likes me next to you, and as his friends expect him to take back with him an accomplished foreign wife, he is willing to put up with me, if he can't get you. There, it is told now."

Claire looked amazed, indignant, but she finally burst into a peal of ringing laughter.

"What an absurd position for all of us, and what a cool pair you must be. He has actually been making love to you, when I thought he was so devoted to me that he would be plunged in despair when I finally broke with him."

"He might have been, if I had not flattered him till he finds me almost necessary to him. I never believed that you would marry him, so I played my own game, and I shall reign in state over his vassals. I shall not invite you to visit me, Claire, much as I am attached to you, for he might return to his old allegiance, you know. Only when I have him entirely to myself, can I secure the power I intend to wield over this wild Cossack. I hope you are quite satisfied with this arrangement, my dear."

"Perfectly; and I wish you joy with the burden you are about to assume, for it will be no trifle to keep him in proper order," said Claire, merrily. "I have often told the baron that you would suit him far better than I should, and I am glad that he has had the wisdom to see it at last. We have dwelt together very harmoniously, Leonie,

but I shall have no wish to see the barbaric splendour in which you will live. Win the heart of your husband, and keep it, for I shall have enough to occupy me in the distant land to which I am going. This ending of the farce we have played is as agreeable to me as to you, I assure you."

"You are the dearest creature in the world, Claire," said Madame Laroche, embracing her. "All I now ask of you is, to insist that my marriage shall take place immediately. I must secure my prize before I can feel certain of my good fortune."

"You shall do so, and I will be your attendant on the auspicious occasion. This is a better ending to a grand passion than the French resource of blowing one's brains out; but I must say that it gives new edge to my contempt for men's vows of eternal constancy. What care I how fair she be, if she is not fair to me," is the baron's motto, I suppose, and I recognize its wisdom. So, hey for the wedding!"

In the afternoon the baron came to hear the decision of his fate. With some chagrin he received it from Claire's own lips, but he did not resent it. He only shrugged his shoulders, and submitted to the inevitable. She excused herself for a few moments, but presently returned, leading Madame Laroche by the hand, and, with a gay smile, said:

"I bring you the fair consoler for your disappointment with regard to myself, baron. Leonie will render you far happier than I ever could, and I ask but one favour of you; that is, that your marriage shall be celebrated within ten days. At the end of that time I shall depart."

For an instant Poliansky looked foolish and annoyed, but the peculiarity of the situation struck the three, and they burst into a simultaneous peal of laughter.

After that, all the embarrassment was over, and the preliminaries of the intended marriage were speedily settled.

The baron went back to Paris to set the lawyers to work to prepare the handsome settlement he intended to make upon his bride. A magnificent trousseau was ordered by him to be ready within a week, and by making extraordinary efforts, the mantua-makers and milliners succeeded in having it completed by the appointed time.

On the tenth morning from the announcement of the engagement, the marriage took place in Nôtre Dame, and on the following day Baron Poliansky and his bride bade adieu to their friends and set out for Russia.

In the meantime, Claire steadily made her preparations for departure. Pierre and Zolande had been simply provided for, by an annuity settled on them before the death of Latour, and they were left in charge of the château during the absence of its mistress.

Six months had elapsed since the death of her brother, and after making a farewell pilgrimage to his tomb, Claire set out for Havre alone, for she did not wish to be embarrassed by the espionage of a servant.

She had permitted Finette to accompany the Baroness Poliansky to her new home; the girl had served her long and faithfully, and she regretted the necessity that parted them, but under the present circumstances, she thought it best to rid herself of her altogether.

What Claire's designs were, and how she carried them out, will be seen as our story progresses.

That lonely voyage, haunted only by phantoms from the long-buried past, was a dreary penance to her, but she consoled herself for all its discomforts, by anticipating the success of her long-cherished vengeance.

CHAPTER LIV.

MANY improvements have been made in the outward appearance of Thornhill during the years which have elapsed since we last looked upon it. A taste for landscape gardening was one of the few that survived the blight which had fallen on its unhappy mistress, and her husband permitted her to indulge in it without interference.

A grove of oak and tulip trees swept away from the entrance on either side, in curved lines, leaving the wide central space in front of the house to be ornamented at the will of Agnes. The hill-side had been cut into a succession of wide terraces, covered with the softest and greenest turf, and planted at the edges with scarlet verbenas, which, in the season of bloom, formed a brilliant contrast to its emerald setting. On the esplanade in front of the portico a few silver maples were grouped together, in such a way as to shade the lawn, without materially obstructing the view from the windows of the house.

A gravelled carriage drive, shaded by lofty forest trees, lay below the terraced portion of the grounds,

and wound gradually upward to a side entrance which opened into a lateral hall. This was nearly as imposing as the main one, and was chiefly used by visitors to the house.

The place was considered by Walter Thorne's neighbours the most desirable one in the vicinity, but not one among them would have been found willing to accept his beautiful home, with the burden of guilt and wretchedness which its possession had entailed on its owner.

Lovely as were the surroundings of Thornhill, few looked up at its stately walls without a shudder, when they thought of the earthly pandemonium they were asserted to contain, though few could speak from actual knowledge. The family had for years held themselves aloof from those who lived near them; the failing health of the mistress of the mansion being the excuse for the seclusion in which they lived. Stories were told of the cause of that broken health, which made people look askance at Walter Thorne, and marvel if they could be true.

He took no pains to contradict them, or to set himself right with those he came in contact with as seldom as possible. He lived, when at home, in his library and studio, seeking the society of none, and brusquely repelling all attempts to penetrate the haughty reserve in which he chose to shroud himself. When he felt the need of social intercourse, he sought it in large cities, in which he was lost in the crowd, and was not an especial mark for comment or notice.

Thorne would often absent himself for months at a time, leaving his wife and daughter in the seclusion of the dull home he no longer found supportable to himself. That his absence was regretted no one believed, for the husband and wife were known to be entirely estranged from each other, and peace at least reigned in the house when the fiery spirit that ruled it was away.

Seventeen years have rolled away since the inauspicious marriage of Agnes Willard and Walter Thorne, years of bitter dissension, which had destroyed the sweetness of her nature and more deeply embittered his; but to her the end of this wretched turmoil was now approaching—the shining angel was hovering over her, waiting to take her to that repose which she had failed to find on earth. But for one tender tie, Mrs. Thorne would have rejoiced in the prospect of release; yet the dying one wept, and trembled, as her fading sight dwelt upon her daughter, a gentle, dependent creature, who clung to her as her only friend.

The shadows of evening were creeping through the lofty room, and the pale invalid, supported by pillows, held the hand of her child clasped closely in her own. Few who looked on Agnes would have recognized the proud beauty, whose strong will had marred her own destiny and that of the man she had once so wildly loved—but for whom she had now neither trust nor affection. A pallid phantom, whose light blue eyes glittered with the fierce passions her wretched life had brought into constant action, was all that remained of the fair loveliness of her who had once borne the name of the Lily.

The daughter, a girl of sixteen, did not resemble her in person or in temper; she was a pale, delicate creature, with eyes of vivid blackness, and hair of the same colour, which was wound in voluminous folds around her small head. Petite, pretty, and graceful, few would have supposed her capable of resistance to anything demanded of her, but the fire of her paternal race only slumbered, to be aroused into action in time of need, to enable her to defend herself from wrong or oppression.

Doctor Brandon, Mrs. Thorne's physician, had left the room to inform her husband of the approaching crisis, as Agnes wished once more to see him before the end came.

When the door closed on him, the dying mother raised her feeble hand, and placing it on the bowed head of the trembling girl, softly said:

"I am going from you, May, my darling. I can no longer stand between you and your father, and guard you from his outbursts of temper. When I am no longer with you, he may be good to you, for I do not think all feeling is dead within him; but you must not be placed entirely in his power. The money left me by my father was settled on my children. You are my only child, and to you it most descend. Should efforts hereafter be made to induce you to relinquish the control of your little fortune, remember that it is my last injunction to you to retain it at all hazards. Promise me this, my daughter, or I cannot die contented."

"Oh, mamma," sobbed May, "do not talk of leaving me all alone. I cannot bear it. What will become of me when you are gone?"

Mrs. Thorne feebly drew her towards herself, and tenderly said:

"I must speak of what will so soon happen, May. I feel already the hand of death laid coldly upon me;

a few more hours, and I shall be away—away in the spirit land; but before I take leave of time, I must have the promise I require. I could not rest in my grave if I left you at the mercy of the man it has been my misfortune to claim as my husband. Promise me that you will retain the independence I bequeath you—that nothing shall induce you to surrender it to your father. He will demand it of you, for he will wish to possess the entire control of your future fate. But you must not—you dare not—give him a power he will be certain to abuse."

Appalled by the earnestness of the speaker, May tremulously said:

"I will promise anything you wish, mamma, if you will not so dreadfully excite yourself. You are exhausting your strength by speaking so much."

"What matters that now? I am floating away on the wings of invisible spirits; they sustain me in this supreme hour; they whisper of hope and peace in a better land. I shall find it there, though I have missed it here, for I have a firm reliance on the mercy of God to the erring and unfortunate creatures He has made. My child, I have no time to lose; there is my Bible—take it in your hand and swear to me to obey my wishes, and I shall be better contented to leave you."

Almost beside herself with grief and terror, May took up the holy book, pressed it to her lips, and gave the promise her mother so earnestly required. Mrs. Thorne sank back with a faint smile on her wan lips, and whispered:

"Thank you, my love. Kiss me; lay my head upon your breast, and so let my spirit pass to him who gave it. I have been a miserable sinner. I have done much wrong in my life, but I feel the assurance that God will forgive and receive me."

May gave her some drops left by the physician, which seemed to revive her, and then placing herself upon the side of the bed, rested the worn face upon her bosom. She wept softly, and felt in that hour all the forlorn misery of her lot in the approaching separation. Her mother was the only creature who had ever loved or caressed her, and she was leaving her to struggle with all the difficulties of her position, aggravated by the opposition to her father to which May had just pledged herself.

In the meantime Doctor Brandon had made his way to the private sanctum of Mr. Thorne, and struck a quick knock upon the door. It was immediately opened by a tall, slender man of dark complexion, with eyes of vivid blackness and features clearly and finely cut. It was a haughty and handsome face, and might have belonged to an Italian aristocrat in the days of the Borgias. The mouth was shaded by a heavy moustache which concealed the cynical expression it had gradually acquired, and the eyes held depths of smouldering passion, of dark unquiet fire, that blazed forth at the slightest provocation. Such was Walter Thorne at the mature age of forty. Time had dealt more lightly with him than with his wife, for his fine physical organization enabled him to bear, without loss of health or spirits, the domestic misery which had broken down Agnes and was bringing her to an untimely grave.

He coldly bowed to the physician, and said: "If you have anything to say to me, Doctor Brandon, I will go with you to the reception-room, for I have been overhauling some old pictures that have been packed away for an age. Pray excuse me for not inviting you to come in."

Doctor Brandon drew back, and briefly said: "I have not the time to enter, Mr. Thorne. I came hither to summon you to your wife's side. She is sinking very fast, and I scarcely think she will be alive an hour hence. If you wish to see her while consciousness remains, you had better come at once to her apartment."

The listener shivered, and a deathly pallor overspread his face, but he recovered himself, and calmly inquired:

"Are you sure that Mrs. Thorne is dying? You know you have thought that several times before, and she revived to new life. Unless there is really a necessity for it, I should prefer not going to her room just now."

The doctor curtly replied: "There can be no mistake this time, Mr. Thorne. The chain you have dragged so long and wearily is about to be snapped for ever; in a few more hours you will be free."

Thorne flashed a lightning glance upon the speaker, but suddenly his expression changed—he seemed to be struggling for breath, and waving back the physician, he hurriedly said, as he closed the door upon him:

"I will come to her in ten minutes."

The room was fitted up as a studio, and artistic taste, combined with lavish expenditure, had made it a gem of beauty, which no one was permitted to enjoy but himself. No profane foot was ever al-

lowed to cross that enchanted threshold, within which Walter Thorne found the only happiness he enjoyed in his own house.

A passionate lover of art, he had collected around him copies of the most celebrated cabinet pictures of ancient and modern times, and the walls from ceiling to floor were literally covered with them. Marbles, white and pure, the work of the best sculptors of our day, gleamed in the niches between the windows, and were grouped in different parts of the large room.

A bay window had been thrown out on the southern side of the apartment, and in the recess his easel was so placed that on raising his eyes from his work, they commanded a wide prospect of hill and valley, with a narrow stream winding through the grounds of his own domain.

A table covered with a scarlet cloth stood in the centre of the floor, on which books and music were scattered, for Mr. Thorne was a connoisseur in more arts than one.

An iron-bound chest was open on the floor, from which an old portfolio filled with unfinished sketches of mountain scenery had been taken, and it now lay open upon the table; other pictures in different stages of progress were heaped up on the floor, but in the bottom of the chest one still remained.

This was one wrapped around with several folds of linen which had grown yellow with time; for many years had elapsed since the painting was placed there as a banned thing—too sacred or too dangerous to be lightly looked upon.

He sank down beside the chest; with heaving breast and dilating eyes he lifted the canvas, tore away the shrouding folds that veiled it, and with panting breath, cried out:

"At last, at last, I am free to look upon that haunting face again. Free, free! Oh, heaven, can it be true that my long thralldom is about to end? That the chain which has eaten into my very heart is about to be broken? Come forth to the light once more, shade of my early love, and let me look upon thee once again. Let me curse the weakness that severed us for ever—making me a slave to the will of another, a tyrant to that unhappy one who is making ready to carry her wrongs to a higher tribunal than that of earth. If they have been many, and hard to bear, I too have had my bitter burden, and it was heavier than hers. Yes, heavier, for she loved me once, and I—I almost detested her as the cause of my bitter anguish."

Thus muttering, with a species of frenzied haste Thorne drew aside the last fold, and placed the picture against a pile of books that lay upon the table. The broad, level light from the uncurtained window fell upon the portrait of a girl so young as to seem almost a child. It was but a sketch, and only the upper portion of the face was finished, but the outline was so beautiful that it might easily have been mistaken for an ideal head.

But Walter Thorne knew better than that, for his own hand had sketched it from the fair original in those hours of youthful passion when he had thought the world well lost for her sake. Long and weary years had passed away since it had been hidden from his sight—years of strife, of heartburning, of wretched discontent, which had embittered his fierce temper, and hardened his nature.

Thorne could not have told what had impelled him to seek that picture on that day, but now he dimly felt that some mysterious prevision warned him that his long bondage was almost ended, and the right restored to him to look upon the shadow that so vividly evoked the past, and brought before him the image of the one love of his passionate and erring heart. He knew that he had been a bad husband, but he made some excuse to himself in the circumstances of his marriage; he had refused hitherto to look upon Claire's picture, lest he should break away from the ties that bound him, and seek his own freedom at the price of such respectability as yet remained to him.

CHAPTER LV.

THORNE'S burning eyes devoured the features so long hidden away, and he passionately cried:

"Oh, my love, my life, my cruelly-treated darling, where are you now? What has been your fate through all these years of darkness and estrangement? Have you given your heart to another? Have you grown hard and cold, and ceased to remember the lover of your youth?—the unworthy one who gave you up, even while you clung to him in such wild abandonment as led you to prefer death to life without him? Ah, no! while I live, you dare not give yourself to another; your faith forbids it, and I thank heaven for that."

A sudden feeling of shame seemed to come over

him, and he thrust the portrait aside, and covered it from his sight.

"Not yet, not yet," he muttered, as he remembered his dying wife, and strongly compressing his lips, he passed through the door, locking it behind him, and moved with light steps towards the farthest wing of the house, in which the apartment of Agnes was situated.

Doctor Brandon had returned to his patient, and on hearing Thorne's approach, he came out, and said: "Ah, it is you at last. Mrs. Thorne is ready to see you, and she wishes to speak with you with no other witnesses than her daughter."

Thorne bowed coldly, and passed into the apartment. He glanced keenly at the pale face that lay upon the breast of his daughter, and saw that the physician had spoken truly. Death was in it, and his heart gave a great bound as he thought:

"I shall, indeed, soon be free, but at what possible cost to myself. With her life passes away my title to my own estate, if Andrew Courtney chooses to press the claim he has on me. Yet, why should I fear about that? It was transferred, no doubt, to Claire, as it was won for her benefit. I will seek her, make my peace with her at any cost, and then—well, then, we may regain the faint shadow of the happiness we once enjoyed with each other."

As these thoughts rushed rapidly through his mind, he came to the bedside, sat down on a chair that was placed near it, and, in measured tones, said:

"You wished to see me, Mrs. Thorne. Can I do anything for you?"

She turned her eyes upon him, and with some bitterness replied:

"I sent for you that you may see for yourself how near you are to the release for which you have so ardently yearned. You have often told me that the only thing I could do to please you would be to die, and restore to you the freedom of which I had conspired with your father to deprive you."

"Agnes, do not let us bandy reproaches now," he more gently said. "Death condones all wrongs, and mine against you have also been great. I am a resentful man, and I have said and done many things that if I were not my father's son, I might repent of."

"It is true, Walter," went on Mrs. Thorne, as if scarcely heeding his words, "that I hurried you into our most unhappy union, but in those days I loved you beyond expression, and I was mad enough to believe that my passion must in time win its reward. I did not understand your nature, and I have been bitterly punished for the wrong I did you. I found that I only inspired disgust where I hoped for love; but all that is past and gone, and it is vain to recur to it. Beneath your hardness, all that was soft and gentle in my nature soon perished, and I gave back taunt for taunt—bitterness for bitterness."

Agnes paused, exhausted by speaking, and with proud sternness, he replied:

"Then why refer to it now, Mrs. Thorne? We agreed to disagree; that tells the whole story. I am not a better man for the experience through which I have passed with you; but in this hour let us exchange forgiveness; it is all that is left for us now."

"Yes, all," was the faint response. "I sent for you not to speak of myself, but of my daughter. Forget that she is my child; think of her only as yours, and try to be kind to her when I am gone. I have done what I could for her, but now she will be alone, and I entreat that you will be a tender and considerate father to her."

Thorne glanced towards the bowed head of May, and slowly said:

"I cannot imagine why you should deem this charge necessary, Agnes. So long as my daughter is obedient to my wishes, I shall do for her all that she can reasonably expect. I hope that assurance satisfies you."

Mrs. Thorne sighed heavily, and closed her eyes for a few moments; her lips moved as if in prayer, and then, with sudden strength, she raised herself from her reclining position, and with feverish energy, replied:

"And is that all you will say to me, even in this supreme hour? Yet why should I have hoped for more from you? You hate me to that degree, that you shrink from your own child because she is also mine. Well, be it so, Walter Thorne, but retribution is preparing for you. With the clear vision sometimes vouchsafed to the dying, I see the future unrolling as a scroll before me, and I feel that in your turn you will be tortured by an unrequited affection. You will love to madness a woman who will only give you the ashes of the dead heart consumed by your own treachery. I know that you will again seek my rival, and she—yes, she, will avenge me. She promised it to me long ago, and she is not one to forget a pledge she has once given. But she will have no love for my poor May, and my

darling will be cast out from her home, from her inheritance. I see it all. I can comprehend the workings of destiny in this solemn hour, and they will be fatal to the only object of my care."

The words sunk into passionate sobs, and she fell back exhausted on the breast of the weeping girl.

With haughtiness her husband replied:

"It seems to me, Agnes, that you but seek to open a gulf between my daughter and myself. Why will you attempt, in these last moments of your life, to implant in her mind distrust of me? I am her protector, her only refuge, and to me she may surely trust to render her future safe and happy. As to your provisions, they are but hallucinations in which I have no faith. Claire I have never heard from since the day she left Ada Digby's protection, and if I were inclined to seek her, I should not know where she is to be found. If I could find her, I would compel her to return to me, and renew the vows that were so cruelly broken. I will not deny to you that I shall seek such happiness as I may now find. I have fasted for it long enough, and my heart is hungry for the sympathy and companionship it could not find in my union with you. If I could find that wronged one, I would seek her through the world, and try to make her forget how bitterly I injured her; but I have little hope of being able to do so now. Seventeen years of silence have woven about her a pall of darkness and forgetfulness, which it will now be impossible to penetrate; even if I succeeded in finding her, she might refuse to forgive me for the wrongs of the past."

Mrs. Thorne muttered with failing breath:

"No—she will not forgive—she will avenge."

Her voice sank away in a long drawn breath, and May uttered a cry of anguish.

"Oh, papa, she is dying! Will you not speak a word of kindness to her in her last moments?"

Her father arose, and gloomily looked down on the pale face, on which the shadows of death were rapidly settling. He took the nerveless hand in his own, and with a faint touch of feeling, said:

"I forgive you, Agnes, for the bitter past. If I am hard, remember that you have made me so; do not die exulting in the belief that you divine for me a future more intolerable than my life with you has been."

She feebly muttered:

"I do not exult in it; but it will come to you. Remember my words, and go on to their fulfilment; that is all I have to say. Kiss me, May, and remember my last command."

Her daughter bent over her, but her lips met those of the dead; with her last words life had passed away, and the poor girl sank fainting upon the pillow.

With a faint feeling of compunction Thorne stood a moment silently gazing upon the dead, and the living, and then rang for assistance. May was borne to her own apartment, and the attention she required given her by the housekeeper. Doctor Brandon came in, and after examining his patient, declared life to be extinct.

With proud composure, Walter Thorne stood by; and with a hard feeling of exultation learned that the clog which had so long fettered him was removed. He looked down at the dead face of the wife he had despised and tortured, but few remorseful regrets arose in his breast. He felt like a man from whose life a crushing weight had suddenly been lifted; and he was not disposed to take up a new burden in the moment of his long-wished-for release. He calmly gave such orders as were necessary, for he would not affect a grief he did not feel. Indeed, scrutinizing eyes looked upon him to ascertain if he did not feel exultation in the event of the day. But his conduct was strictly decorous, and as soon as possible he retired to the privacy of his own apartments, into which no one ventured to follow him.

Thorne did not again uncover that haunting face. Some feeling, scarcely comprehensible to himself, withheld him from doing so, though he could not prevent his thoughts from wandering to that long-buried past, and living over in fancy that rapturous dream of love and romance.

Such men as he love with desperation, hate with a bitterness unknown to tamer souls, and she who was just gone had only possessed the power to arouse the tiger in his nature. Even at the last, when he would have made an effort to be gentle with her, the estrangement between them made itself cruelly felt, and he had found it impossible to be otherwise than cold and hard, even when she was passing away for ever.

He scarcely thought of his daughter at all, and when he said he only resented the little confidence his wife evidently had in him as the guardian of her child's future happiness, he recalled the last words of Agnes, and marvelled of what nature that command was to which she had referred. He half-savagely muttered:

"It was something to place May in opposition to me—I understand that very well. But china does not do well to come in contact with iron, as her mother would have taught her if she had been wise. Well, well, we shall see soon enough now."

The funeral took place in due time, and a large concourse of people came to see Mrs. Thorne laid in the family burying-ground, and to make such observations on the state of affairs at Thornhill as were possible.

They only saw a sombre, stern man, who went through the ceremonial with all proper outward respect for the dead wife, whose heart he was accused of having broken, and a pale, drooping girl shrouded in crape and bombazine, who shrank with nervous shyness from the expressions of sympathy that were addressed to her.

No one ventured to offer condolences to Mr. Thorne, for his relations towards the departed were too well known to induce his neighbours to believe they would be well received.

The ordinary routine of life at Thornhill was scarcely interrupted by the decease of the mistress of the establishment, for she had so long been an invalid that no one looked to her for orders. A competent housekeeper had for years been in charge of the establishment, and no one missed the unhappy lady, save that desolate girl who looked out from her lonely room with the dreary consciousness that she was bereft of the only heart that ever loved her.

CHAPTER LVI.

Now that his wife was gone, Walter Thorne, with some uneasiness, recalled the words of Courtney—that, while she lived, no claim to the large sum he had lent to him at the gaming-table would be put forward. He believed that Claire had instigated that unusual proceeding, and that to her would be given the power to ruin him, if she wished to proceed to extremities.

But Thorne did not feel much uneasiness on that score; he flattered himself that if he could meet her again, face to face, he could disarm her resentment and bring her back to his arms as loving, if less confiding, than in those early days of passionate enchantment.

But to whom should he apply to inform him of all that had befallen her through these long years of silence and estrangement? He suspected that Ada Digby could give him the information he so much desired to possess, for he felt convinced that a straggling correspondence was still kept up by her with the former object of her care; but he had quarrelled with Miss Digby two years before, because he thought she too openly espoused the cause of his wife against himself, and no communication was held between Thornhill and the cottage.

At present, she was absent from home; and if his pride would have stooped to apply to her for the information he wanted, his impatience to learn something definite would not permit him to await her return. Thorne had held no communication with Courtney since that night, four years before; but, shortly after the decease of his wife, he addressed him the following letter:

"THORNHILL, March 2nd, 18—.

"MR. COURTNEY—Sir, I shall not leave you to learn from the public prints that the wife in whose existence my title to your forbearance lay, is dead. It is now two weeks since she was buried, and I am naturally anxious to know what effect her decease will have upon my fortune."

"In my madness on that fatal night, I lost a sum which will cover the entire value of my estate, handsome as it is; and if you now press for payment, I must reduce myself to penury, or become dishonoured by refusing to pay a debt which gentlemen regard as more binding than those secured by law. Of course, the last resource will be impossible to me, and but one other means of settlement remains."

"I have reflected deeply on the singular compact you made with me, and I can come to but one conclusion, and that is, that my first wife is the party to be benefited by this transaction. If Claire proposed to herself to gain power over me in this way, and bring me back to my old allegiance to herself, it was a *rus* unworthy of her and quite unnecessary."

"Now that I am free to express my true feelings and there is no one to dictate to me the course of action I must pursue, I find but one desire in my heart—that is, to reclaim my repudiated wife, and endeavour to atone to her for the suffering I most unwillingly inflicted upon her. You, who have always been the master of your own actions, can scarcely understand the force of the pressure brought to bear on me in those youthful days, when I was held under the iron rule of a father

who never swerved from a decision he had once made."

"The wrong I committed against Claire was to marry her at all, knowing as I did the inflexible will I had to contend with; but I was so infatuated that I hoped for impossibilities, and I used most questionable means to obtain her consent to an elopement."

"I do not defend what followed. I was literally forced to give her up, or to bring her to poverty. I purchased my father's forgiveness by accepting the wife he had chosen for me, but no happiness sprang from that union. It is ended now, and I am once more free to return to the object around whom all my tenderest thoughts have clustered, even while another claimed me as her husband."

"Claire refused to recognize the validity of the legal decision which freed us both, and therefore I believe she is still as much my wife as she considered herself to be in the days of our early separation. I do not wish to present myself before her as one possessing any right over her, but I shall be glad to know where she at present resides, that I may seek her and endeavour to win forgiveness for that past which I was powerless to control. I know that I grievously sinned against her, but I was also sinned against myself, and she is not the Claire of old, if she refuse to take that into consideration."

"I have never dared inquire concerning her, lest I should break from the bonds that bound me and seek her in defiance of all. I know that she went to France with your mother, and remained with her half-brother, but beyond that all is darkness. Pray, write without delay, and inform me of her whereabouts, and also enlighten me as to what I am to expect with reference to the bond you hold against me."

"Respectfully,

W. THORNE."

After an interval of ten days, a reply came—brief, and to the point:

"THE GRANGE, March 7th, 18—.

"MR. THORNE—Permit me to say to you, in reply to yours of the 2nd, that the bond to which you refer is no longer in my possession. What use the party to whom it was transferred will choose to make of it, I cannot say. The death of your wife was to be the signal for action, and I have no power to retard it."

"As to Claire, I do not think that any concessions will avail to obtain her forgiveness for the past, and therefore I decline giving you her address."

"Respectfully, ANDREW COURTNEY."

Walter Thorne read this curt reply with a sardonic curl of his lip, but he grew pale as he thought of the possible consequences to himself. His next thought was, how he should pay off the debt if the claim were presented. In the last four years he had saved a considerable sum from his annual income; and the settlement of his wife, if he could gain the control of it, would enable him, at least, to stave off ruin.

He had not yet examined her papers, but under the spur of his present excitement, he went in search of her desk, and brought it into the library for examination. In that she had probably left some clue to the disposition of her property. Under the circumstances, it may be imagined with what feelings he found and read the following letter addressed to himself:

"January 20th, 18—.

"WALTER,—I write to you what I could not tell you without a scene of angry recrimination, which I am unable to bear in my present state of health."

"You are aware that the money left to me by my father was placed in the hands of a trustee for the benefit of myself. Under the settlement, I have the right to dispose of it as I please, and I have left it to my daughter to do with as she chooses from the day of my death; but I shall exact from her a promise to retain the control of her little fortune, and I request you to refrain from attempting to wrest from her what I have given her."

"I foresee for my poor child a hard and cruel lot. You do not love her—you will probably soon seek to marry her to some one chosen by yourself, that you may free your house from her unwelcome presence. If she refuse obedience, you will cast her off, and May will have nothing to save her from poverty, but the sum of fifteen thousand pounds which I have bequeathed to her."

"Allow her to retain it in peace, I entreat. Do not make her life unhappy by persecuting her to break the promise I shall obtain from her. You will not succeed, for she is true to her word, and she will not recede from what she has pledged herself to do."

"My poor child would love you, Walter, if she had any encouragement to do so; when I am gone, draw her nearer to your heart, and try to make up to her for the loss she will so keenly feel. Deprived of the only heart on which she has been permitted to lean, she will need consolation; she will be left alone in the world, with no one to turn to but you. Oh, Walter, think of this, and be kind to her."



[MAY REFUSES TO VIOLATE HER PROMISE.]

"If you would lay aside your resentment towards Ada Digby, and ask her to come to Thornhill as a companion for May, I should be more willing to leave her. Think of this, and if you can endeavour to comply with this last request from her who would have been a true and loving wife to you, had you not crushed out every spark of affection by your own indifference, or something worse."

"AGNES THORNE."

Walter Thorne read over these lines with a frowning brow, and angry heart. They did not appeal to his better feelings, as their writer had hoped. The antagonism between himself and the wife who had been forced on his acceptance survived even beyond the grave, and with a suppressed oath he muttered:

"Ada Digby, indeed! She shall never come beneath my roof to sustain my daughter in rebellion against me; to sit up in judgment on me, as she is so fond of doing. So that is settled."

With a portentous frown he gathered up the scattered papers, restored them to the desk from which they had been taken, and sharply rang the bell. When a servant came he abruptly said:

"Inform Miss Thorne that I wish to see her in this room."

In a few moments May entered, looking pale and agitated, for such a summons was an unusual thing, and she feared that something unpleasant was about to happen. Thorne pointed to a chair, and brusquely said:

"I have been looking over your mother's papers, and among them I have found a letter addressed to myself. In it she asks me to give you my affectionate care, as if she had supposed me such a monster as to withhold it, if it be deserved. She has placed you in opposition to me on purpose to produce estrangement between us, and I have sent for you to see if you value my affection sufficiently to make a sacrifice to retain it."

May sank down upon the seat and endeavoured to stifle the rapid pulsations of her heart at this abrupt address. She feared her father much more than she loved him, but she possessed a power of resistance he had not calculated upon. She tremulously replied:

"I would do much to gain your approbation, papa, but I hoped you would spare me any contest with regard to the last wishes of my mother. They are sacred to me, sir, and I dare not disobey them."

"So, you are ready to assert your independence of me, are you? but I will yet break you to my will, and show you, as I did her that is gone, that I am master of your fate."

"I promise to do my best to please you, papa; you need have no fear that I shall prove a disobedient daughter to you, even if I do refuse to violate the promise I gave my poor mother when she lay dying; for of course you refer to that."

He angrily said:

"There is but one thing you can do to prove that you understand your duty to me, and that is to comply with the demand I now make, to surrender the management of your money to me. I shall waste no words on you—I require you to do this."

May placed her hand over her palpitating heart, and for a few moments the words that formed themselves upon her lips refused to come forth. Her father's stern eyes were fixed upon her, and she shrank before their fiery light. At length she faltered:

"I have every confidence in you, papa, but it is impossible for me to violate the promise I made to the dead. I dare not, even if I incur your displeasure by refusing to do so. I am your daughter, sir; I understand my duty towards you, and the possession of a few thousands will not induce me to play the part of a rebellious child. Have confidence in me, and respect the feeling that dictates opposition to your will."

"Confidence! I can have none in the prudence of a girl of your age. It is an insult to me that you are in a measure placed beyond my control. Your mother acted thus because she wished to produce dissension between us; there could have been no other motive for such a proceeding. Your beggarly pittance is of small importance to a man of my fortune; but it is enough to become a snare for you—to render you an object of speculation to some needy spendthrift, who may marry you for this money, knowing that with your hand he can gain possession of it. It is that which I wish to guard you against."

May recalled what her mother had said on this very subject, and her determination was strengthened to be firm in her refusal to comply with her father's demands. She gently, but decidedly, said:

"It is very painful to me to refuse what you ask, papa; but I cannot break the pledge I gave to my mother in her last moments. If you will be gentle and kind with me, you shall have no cause to complain, although I do retain the right to the undisputed possession of her legacy."

"Am I to understand that you refuse? absolutely and positively refuse?"

She bent her head in assent; Thorne started from his seat, and paced the floor rapidly for many moments. May trembled in the anticipation of a

violent outburst of passion, such as she had often witnessed between himself and her mother; but angry as he was, her father controlled the torrent of furious words that were ready to burst from his lips. He saw how much the poor girl had suffered, for she looked scarcely able to be out of her bed, and he also felt the assurance that if she possessed any portion of his spirit, she would not submit to be trampled upon.

Thorne thought it best to try other means to subdue her to his will, and he at length stopped in front of her, and in measured tones said:

"There is but one way left to protect you from the dangers I foresee for you. Until you have acceded to my demand, I will seclude you from society; you shall live here alone, under the strict watch of Mrs. Benson, for I can trust her to play the part of the duenna. You shall visit no one—receive no guests. Our neighbours do not trouble themselves much about us, but if any of them should call, I shall order them to be refused admittance. You will go nowhere but to church, and not even there, unless the housekeeper can accompany you. We shall see how you will bear this enforced solitude, for I am going away in a few days, to be absent I do not know how long. If you repent of your obstinacy and yield to my demand, I will take you to some fashionable place of resort this summer, and give you such advantages as my only child should enjoy. If not, you will remain immured here till I find some one to take you off my hands."

May bowed her head, and faintly said:

"I must submit to your will, sir, though it will be cruel to leave me here with no society at all. Mrs. Benson is not an educated woman, and she is no companion for me. I venture to entreat that you will ask my cousin, Ada Digby, to come to me. She is the only person who would be willing to do so for my mother's sake; and in my present state of feeling, her society will be more congenial to me than that of younger persons."

"I dare say," he scornfully replied. "But it is not my object to give you a congenial companion. Besides, Ada Digby is the last person I would voluntarily ask to come to my house as an inmate. She is a meddlesome person, who takes it on herself to give her opinion on subjects that do not concern her. You may give up all hope of having her for your friend, for I will never tolerate her presence near me. If you find the life to which I condemn you intolerable, all you have to do to change it, is to notify me of your willingness to comply with the terms I just now stated."

(To be continued.)



[JUDITH IN THE TOILS.]

COPPER AND GOLD.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CLARENCE paused for a moment to receive a stimulating draught from Father Antelmo, and then continued:

"I believed that I could escape. I knew that the mouth of the vault could not have been sufficiently long bricked up to harden the mortar, and the vault was not so shallow and narrow, but that I could stand upon my hands and knees.

"I could see nothing. I was amid the most intense darkness. I felt about with my hands and feet, hoping to find something that might aid me to cut my way out.

"I was confident that those who had entombed me must have done so in great haste. Certainly it must have been performed in the deepest darkness of the night, or I should not have been placed there unconfined. No such atrocity could have been perpetrated during the day, for the cemeteries, those 'Cities of the Dead,' as they are aptly called, have always in their silent avenues a few, and often crowds of mourners, before the tombs of beloved ones departed.

"It was absurd, therefore, to suppose that I had not been cast or dragged into the vault in the dead and darkest hours of the night. That being true, I had every reason to believe that the mouth of the tomb had been hastily sealed up. Had it been otherwise, I should have been dead, for then there would have been left no crevice through which not only air, but light and sunbeam, could have penetrated.

"I felt about in vain for some tool which might have been left in the vault. I found nothing.

"I searched in my pocket. I found a small knife and my pistols, only.

"I placed my back and shoulders against the bricks mortared up in the entrance of the vault, and bore backward with all my strength.

"Had I not been weakened by great loss of blood, want of food, and the fever of my wounds, I have no doubt that I could have succeeded in pressing forward to air and liberty outward.

"You know it is the custom to place but two thicknesses of brick between the dead and the living, and that a heavy marble slab is afterwards, by those who can afford it, sealed in with lead against these two layers of brick.

"I did not know that a marble slab had been placed against the mortared bricks—fortunately by hasty and inexperienced hands, yet with sufficient

strength, and fitting so firmly in its proper place as to defy all my feeble, though desperate, efforts to press the bricks outward.

"I renewed my efforts. I sank down exhausted. I besought heaven for aid and strength. I tried again.

"The fierceness of my struggles re-opened the partially closed wounds in my head; my neck, my shoulders, and my face were deluged with blood.

"I fainted. Heaven only knows why the light of reason and the old fierce courage of my heart came back to me. But they did, and I resorted to fresh efforts.

"Not with my shoulders, however. Experience had taught me that my strength was reduced from that of a man to that of a child. I remembered my pistols—a pair of large, single-barrelled, and heavily loaded weapons, with which I had armed myself ever since I began to investigate the villainies of Miles Sherlock.

"I knew well the tremendous power of gunpowder when exploded against any resisting substance. I knew, too, that if I discharged my pistols within that narrow vault, and failed to force the mouth of my tomb outwards, the dense smoke and stench might, in my weak state, stifle, suffocate, destroy the little strength still left to me.

"But I was desperate. All other means had failed. I had tried my knife, blade after blade, upon the bricks, and each had snapped, until I cast the useless handle aside with a groan of despair.

"I must escape, or perhaps hundreds of lives and millions of property might be destroyed by Miles Sherlock."

"By Miles Sherlock!" exclaimed Freeland, in amazement.

"Yes. You are astonished, but I cannot pause to explain what I know, at this moment," replied Clarence. "The thought that if I died he would, in all probability, succeed in his designs of stupendous crime—far exceeding in intended atrocity all that he has perhaps hitherto achieved in infamy—nerved me to dare the perils of an unsuccessful discharge of my pistols. I thought of Hermione, too."

"Of Hermione Glenville?" cried Rouletta.

"Yes, for I may as well state that I devotedly love her, and that she as devotedly loves me," said Clarence, proudly. "We were to have been secretly married on the 18th, yesterday," he added, as he glanced at the clock upon the mantelpiece.

"And I thought she was my ardent rival for the love of—of Miles Sherlock," thought Rouletta, whose heart recoiled from calling him father.

"I thought of the tremendous interests involved

in my escape, wrapped up in my life, hanging upon a hair, as it were, floating like a bubble upon the feeble current of blood scarcely pulsating through my depleted veins. I thought of life, youth, happiness, and Hermione.

"I placed the wide muzzles of my pistols against the mouth of the vault. I leaned all my weight against their handles, so that come what might, the explosion should be loud.

"The discharge of my weapons might not force the mouth of the vault outwards, yet the noise of the explosion would be heard by someone, and at least my body might be found, and an inquiry started which heaven's hand might lead to the detection of those who had murdered me—who had entombed a living man.

"With a prayer to heaven for success I placed a finger upon each trigger, and pressed each at the same moment.

"Both pistols were discharged with a report which seemed to me most awful, with a concussion in that confined, narrow vault which bruised me dreadfully, stunning me for a moment, and benumbing my arms from wrist to shoulder.

"But in an instant after it seemed to me as if simultaneous with the terrific explosion, air, wind, rain and storm rushed in at the shattered mouth of the vault.

"Great heavens! how deep and delicious were the draughts of fresh and strengthening air which I inhaled! How cool and reviving the torrents of rain driven in upon me by the furious wind!

"A flash of lightning, keen, long, and quivering, illumined the scene as I started to drag myself from what had so nearly been my tomb.

"My eyes grasped, devoured and recognized a thousand objects at once. I was in the cemetery. I recognized by that flash of heaven's granting, the tombs of many known to me by name. I saw, too, that the mouth of the vault in which I was was not more than four feet from the ground, one of the third tier of those horrible places in which the dead are compelled to be interred.

"I rested a moment to regain my breath. It seemed to me that I had not breathed for hours, that my lungs had been labouring to inhale, but only the foul, mephitic odours of the grave.

"Then came a reaction. I became sick, oh heaven! sick I feared unto death. I sank down upon my breast, my head, beyond the edge of the shattered vault, the storm beating into my face.

"I revived, and slowly crawled from my dreadful prison. I stood erect, feebly erect, but free, and leaning against the tombs, as here and there I en-

countered them in groping my way to the nearest gate, staggered onward.

"I felt, ah, I know not how often—a score of times. I regained my feet, earnest in my hope to escape from the cemetery. To my fevered imagination a thousand gibing ghosts issued from their tombs enshrouded in the ghastly robes of the dead, with all the horrors with which superstition has painted the pallid features and shadowy forms of the departed. Ah, it was mental agony and bodily weakness."

Clarence paused for a moment, as if to recover from the vividness of his memory those fearful moments.

His hearers did not break the deep silence. Their faces portrayed the interest they took in his narration. Rouletta's eyes were full of tears as she gazed compassionately upon the noble and agitated features of the speaker.

"At length my feeble hands, sore and blistered from the efforts I had made, grasped the strong iron bars of the gate for which I had struggled, as a drowning man struggles for a floating straw."

"Can I ever forget the thrill of agony which chilled my very marrow, as I discovered that the gate was doubly locked!"

"I had feared that this fact would end my hopes of speedy escape. Yet I had hoped; I knew that wretches, as well as other men, were sometimes careless. I had remembered, even while dragging my exhausted body thither, that this gate was open a few nights before at midnight, as I chanced to pass the cemetery. Great heaven! it seemed like a mockery that it should have been wide open when I had no wish to enter, and doubly locked when my very soul panted to go out."

"Why do they lock it at all?" I cried, as I shook at the strong, upright iron bars. "Is it because they are afraid that their dead may fly from their cold, damp prisons?"

"I reflected that all this barring, bolting, and wearing of chains and padlocks, was because the cupidity of base men made them rob even the bones of the dead—made men steal the ornaments with which holy affection of the living had enriched and adorned the houses of the deceased."

I recoiled from the gate, and sank down, hopeless. I had not strength to scale it, nor yet the wall of the cemetery. I had not strength, nor hope to create strength, to try another gate—even to attempt to find another.

"Here, then," I thought, "my body will be found to-morrow."

I had not power to raise my voice above the roar of the storm. I despaired, wept, and thought of Hermione.

"You may call it chance, accident, singular—what you will, but I call that which happened the mercy of heaven. Even as I despaired, the gate which had mocked my efforts was shattered, torn, riven, melted by a thunderbolt. The lightning ate it up, devoured it in an instant, and for a time I thought the livid flame had smitten me blind. A second flash revealed the work of the first. The gate had vanished. There was nothing but space, a short space between me and the open street."

I sprang up with the name of heaven upon my lips. For a moment I was strong again, and I believe I bounded from the cemetery. I was free, and with a fierce kind of triumph at my heart, I moved onwards to seek refuge with Harry Freeland.

"My feebleness returned, and it was agony to reflect that even yet I might sink down helpless, dying, drowning in the flooded streets, through which the water was rushing in torrents, often waist deep."

"While thus I struggled on, dreading lest my staggering feet might lead me into some deep gutter, some dangerous ditch, in which I would inevitably be drowned—after escaping death by the bludgeon of the assassin, and by the horrors of the vault—it was then that a mild and gentle voice said to me, as a friendly hand grasped my arm:

"Friend, I pray you show a stranger where he may obtain shelter for the night."

"It was you, Father Antelmo, who thus accosted me, and as your kindly voice sounded in my ear, my soul said to my heart:

"Take courage! Heaven has sent this man to save your life, that you may be useful to your fellow men."

"But neither you nor I, Father Antelmo, imagined the truth—that heaven had sent you to lead me thus into the arms of my father."

With these words, Clarence threw himself again into the strong and loving embrace of him whom we have known as Harry Freeland.

Father and son now mingled their tears freely, and the good priest knelt and silently returned thanks to heaven, for the joy which he had been the means of creating in the noble hearts of these honest and honourable men.

Rouletta could not restrain her sobs of sympathy, and she, too, silently prayed that nothing might happen ever to lessen the happiness of those present.

Yet scarcely a moment had passed when the bell in the hall gave warning that more, who desired to enter that house, were at the gate.

CHAPTER XXVII.

HERMIONE and the faithful Swiss, after leaving the house of the Forettis, were thrice passed, within a few minutes, by a dark and shadowy form, which seemed to hover around them as a vulture glows over its hoped-for feast.

Without suspecting it, also, they three times passed a hidden enemy, the owner of that same dark and shadowy form. Without any apprehension that they were several times followed, and then quitted, by the same person, they pursued their perilous way towards Freeland's cottage.

Judith Atmonds had no personal hatred towards Hermione—that is, no more personal hate than that which every vile and envious soul bears towards every virtuous and unsullied person.

Yet, all observers of the dark side of human nature know, that this general hatred of the vicious against the virtuous never hesitates to do evil to gratify that fiendish, splotch-like hatred.

But, in addition to this universal leprosy of character, this miserable woman intensely hated Jacob, her father, and Miles Sherlock, once her husband.

Visionary schemes of terrible vengeance had racked her brain for years; not the simple vengeance which any desperate hand and heart could gain by a secret dagger's thrust, or by dropping poison into the cup of the hated one. Her wicked nature looked deeper into the future, to seek a revenge that should blast even the callous soul of Miles Sherlock.

If, by ruining the happiness and good name, even of the most lovely and innocent of her own sex, she could move an inch towards her purpose, it added zest and spice to her schemes.

Thus when she saw Hermione, whose fair face she knew well, escaping from the villany of Carrol Glenville, she remembered that Miles Sherlock, upon whom she had played the spy for years, ardently longed to call Hermione his wife.

Hovering near her and her escort, she quickly overheard enough to convince her that Hermione was seeking refuge, and directing her steps towards Freeland's cottage.

That Sherlock would force Hermione to wed him, if she were once in his power, she had good reason to believe. That the act would for ever destroy the happiness of Hermione, she knew. That it would also blight the ambitious hopes of Carrol Glenville, she also was convinced.

That the vile nature of Miles Sherlock would not relinquish his designs upon the beautiful Rouletta, she also knew.

She wished, therefore, that Sherlock might speedily succeed in his plans against each maiden.

If he deceived Rouletta, if he eloped with her, or abducted her, he would destroy, unwittingly, his own daughter. He would blast the soul of Carlo di Magnasco, whom she hated because he had scorned her advances years before. He would for ever make miserable the heart of Hermione, who would be informed by her that she had wedded the husband of another. He would wreck the ambition and avaricious schemes of Carrol Glenville—that unnatural father who had wrought against her to enable Kingston Boyne to repudiate her as his wife. He would shock, perhaps to insanity, the mind of Milania Alioni, who should, by her information, learn that her search for her lost daughter had ended in finding that daughter the victim of the daughter's father.

She had, so far, succeeded well. Her treacherous letters had slowly but surely attracted all her intended victims into one spot. The flies were in the spider's web. They had not, as yet, suspected that they were entangled in the meshes of that far-reaching web of hate and malice.

Yet, contrary to her original purpose, she had been forced, as she believed, to slay one whom she had sometimes hoped she might use against another.

She had thrust her poisoned dagger into the bosom of the Arabian.

No doubt, or very little, remained in her mind that her blow had been fatal, yet the absence of his body from the spot where she had expected to find it alarmed her, and with an eager desire to peer into the house of the Forettis, after hovering for a time around Hermione and the Swiss, she attempted to enter one of the windows of that house, and selected that at which we have related her malicious and instantly recognized visage alarmed the Countess Alioni and her daughter.

Foiled in her attempt secretly to enter the house, and confident that those two would be near the Arabian, if he were in the house, or certainly if his

corpse were in the house, she scrambled from the dangerous situation to which she had recklessly ascended, and, having descended from the roof of the adjoining house to the street, proceeded to write and deliver that note which had startled the fancied security of Miles Sherlock, and forced him to remember that there was a woman who had discovered that he—the gay, fashionable, and respectable gentleman—was the mysterious "Giles," the associate and chief of all the thieves and vagabonds of the town.

But Judith had not, like Clarence Parmond, discovered the grand aim of Miles Sherlock in becoming "Giles," the associate and chief of these men.

Had she known his purpose, her heart would have told her to stand aloof, now that her intended victims were entangled in her web, and let Miles Sherlock create the havoc and rapine he had planned.

She knew the power, cunning, and daring of the man, and this knowledge had caused her to be extremely wary in every step she took. She made a false step when she accosted him, and allowed him to know that there was one who had penetrated his disguise.

From that moment she was doomed, for, as he had threatened, it was dangerous for anyone to know so much of Miles Sherlock, and he to know so little of the other.

Every member of the seven bands which made up the league of crime had been put upon the alert to capture a woman who knew too much of the mysterious "Giles."

Within fifteen minutes after Judith parted from Miles Sherlock, as mentioned in a former chapter, these words had been placed in circulation:

"One thousand pounds' reward will be paid by me for the delivery at my rooms of the body, dead or alive, of a female spy, who dresses in black, has two plain rings upon the little finger of the left hand, three rings, one jewelled, upon the ring finger of the same hand, a single ring upon the forefinger of the same hand; two rings, one plain, one jewelled, upon the little finger of the right hand; a wart, or excrescence, upon the right thumb."

"The hands long, bony, and delicate. The face of the woman is pitted."

"GILES."

Judith, with all her cunning, lost her power when she ventured to allow the hands of Miles Sherlock to grasp her own. He could not see, but his wary and experienced fingers could feel. Even as he conversed with her in the deep darkness, his fingers glided inquiringly over her own, and twice his hand was passed over her face.

Thus he gained that correct description of her hands, which he soon after disseminated for her capture.

Having delivered the note in which she informed Sherlock of Hermione's design to seek refuge at the cottage of Freeland, she moved away with hasty steps.

As she passed within the flickering radiance of one of the street-lamps she was grasped by two men, one of whom said:

"Birds in black feathers are at a premium, my lady. How many rings do you wear—eh? So you are the silent woman that lives no one knows how—neither thief nor honest man."

"If you wish to rob me, first let us spell a word: 'G-I-L-E-S.'"

said Judith and the man alternately; she concluding, and adding, "Which spells 'Giles' the world over, and if you are from him, so am I, so let me pass."

"I would, my lady, only there is a spy abroad, and we must see how many rings you wear. Tally off, Jem, while I follow," he added to his comrade, and holding Judith's wrist in his strong grasp.

His comrade read the description we have given, and the man exclaimed:

"I've won the thousand—we have, my lad, and will share fair and square. This is the spy. Come, my lady, Captain Giles wishes to see you."

Judith had heard the comrade of the man read the offer of reward for her capture, and her heart sank with terror.

She was lost. She knew Miles Sherlock would have no mercy upon her. She had penetrated into the secrets of the various bands, and she knew that the penalty was death to all spies.

She was mute with despair and unresisting, as her captors dragged, rather than led, her towards the street. So sudden a termination to all her schemes, when all seemed in triumphant progress towards a speedy victory, made her heart faint and her limbs weak.

Her courage and cunning returned, however, before they reached the house of Sherlock.

"You said you were to receive a thousand pounds for my capture. I will give you twice as much to let me free," she said to her captors.

"Heard you never of honour among thieves, my lady?" jeeringly asked the man who had just spoken. "Not for ten times your offer would I play false with Captain Giles."

"You are a boaster," she said, with a scoff. "A beggar could buy your soul with a farthing."

"You're a spitfire," replied the man. "Of what use do you suppose a million pounds would be to me, if I got them to play false with the captain? In twenty-four hours I'd be found, if found at all, floating in the river with my throat cut. Oh, no! I've known three or four, as sharp lads as ever played hide and seek with the evil one, try to play with Captain Giles. And what do you suppose was the end of it? Every mother's son of them were found here and there with the tops of their heads smashed in, and nobody could tell who did it, nor when nor how it was done. But here we are—pull the bell, Jem. It's no use trying to overtop the captain, my lady."

(To be continued.)

BERENICE'S BETROTHAL.

"BERENICE," the voice betrayed a lurking sarcasm, "I think it would be showing only proper respect to myself and your cousin Cora, if you would leave off dreaming, and make yourself neat, if no more; you know we expect Captain Duncan to-night."

"Oh, Berenice likes the role of 'poor cousin'; she thinks it interesting!" and a baleful light shot from Cora's greenish eyes—I can think of no other colour that so well applied to them—"that everlasting faded gingham is her pet costume; there, you needn't flush up and look so like a female ogre."

The colour had mounted to Berenice's cheek, her thin, sensitive nostrils dilated quickly, while her large eyes, which, when in repose, were dark, liquid gray, chameleon-like, now, looked intensely black, as was their wont when she was labouring under a stress of feeling; the red lips parted, as though to speak, then were more closely compressed over her beautiful teeth, and, rising with quiet dignity, she left the room in silence; a hard, metallic laugh followed her, and the words:

"Oh, queenly Cleopatra!"

Berenice Stafford did not look like a woman who could be insulted with impunity, nor was she; but her position in her aunt's family was peculiar. Five years previous to the opening of our story, her father had died intestate, and in his last hour, had exacted from her a promise, that she would not leave her aunt's protection until she was twenty-one, unless to find shelter in a home of her own; for he had a great dread of a woman's fighting her way outside in a cold, hard world, as he termed it; and it was not strange it seemed thus to him, lying there so utterly prostrate now at the very last; nor was it strange he eagerly accepted his sister's proffered protection for Berenice, trying to believe that this said sister, whom he could but remember as cold, heartless, and wanting in integrity, had changed for the better during their long years of separation. Berenice's mother would not have made this mistake; women, after all is said, are better judges of women than men are, or can be; and this was left for Berenice Stafford to learn by years of bitter experience.

Place an unprotected female in a house where she is a dependant, or where it can be made to appear so, and where the power is so entirely in the hands of unprincipled, envious women—as they were of Berenice, for her beauty, or for any other reason, and no one, unless they have had an experience of their own, can form the barest idea of the traps, snares, and false positions that will hedge them about.

Berenice had experienced suffering known only to herself; but bound by her promise to her dying father, she bent her head and breasted the surging waves as best she might, looking forward with longing heart to the closing of the two years intervening between this present time and the end of her martyrdom. She never yielded in the presence of her persecutors, after the first year or so, but often in the quiet of her room she would drop her sorrowful head, and wall out her woe. Poor, orphaned Berenice! Heaven pity such!

But to return to the day in question. After leaving her Aunt Evelyn and Cousin Cora, she went to her chamber on the third floor, entered it and bolted the door; sitting down hopelessly, and resting her burning forehead against the cold plate-glass, her tears fell, drop by drop; not such tears as give relief, but slow, torturing tears; for the past week she had suffered intensely, terribly; when they had ceased flowing, she arose, bathed her face, knotted her dark, glossy hair at the back of her head carelessly, and yet with fine effect, strove to brush away the short curls, and to smooth out the shining waves that swept back from her low, perfectly-formed forehead, but they would not mind her will; then going to a wardrobe she let her eye wander about it, selected a drab delaine dress for the afternoon toilette, fastened her plain linen collar at the

throat with a knot of cherry velvet, and her cuffs with coral studs, looking, despite the plainness of her dress, a gentlewoman.

Soon there was a hurried step up the stairs, a rustle of silk through the hall, and then Cora's voice, so imperious, rang out:

"Berenice, why are you so long? Nancy is out, and you must know there is no one but you to attend the door. Come quickly, for there goes the bell, and I suppose it's Captain Duncan;" and Cora walked off in her grand style, so evidently assumed, while Berenice followed, looking almost queenly, in her sweet, but dignified simplicity.

The visitor proved to be Captain Duncan, and as Berenice showed him in, she could but admire his large, manly proportions, and think of the pleasant heart-warming smile and honest expression that beamed upon his face, as she gave him admittance.

"Miss Stafford, Captain Duncan," was the introduction that came, some little time after the other congratulations had ended, in a cool, indifferent way, as though it could matter but little to either party; but Captain Duncan, in his honest, whole-souled way, crossed the room, bowed, and clasping Berenice's hand, shook it with cordial kindness.

At tea, though Captain Duncan addressed his conversation mostly to Mrs. Gordon and Cora, his eye often wandered to the opposite side of the table, where Berenice sat in dignified self-possession; silence being her safest shield from covert indignities, she only ventured a word when expressly addressed; but when she did speak, her words gave index of a refined and cultivated heart and mind.

"Well, mamma," said Cora, that night after Captain Duncan had retired, "that intolerable Berenice, with her demure face, has half-stolen Captain Duncan's heart already!"

"Oh, nonsense, Cora! as if he would think of her!" replied Mrs. Gordon, bridling.

"But then, mamma, all men are attracted by pretty women, and Berenice is very pretty."

"Yes, pretty, my love, but you are—"

"Anything but that; don't think I'm such a simpleton as to believe it, even if I should be told so fifty times each day. I'm plain. I'd rather never have existed than to have been born a homely woman; and now that I've set my heart upon marrying Captain Duncan (I made up my mind to that the first time I saw him and his elegant home), and if I'm disappointed in this, I shall wish I was dead—truly, mamma, I shall!"

"Don't talk so, darling. I do not think there's the slightest chance of his becoming interested in Berenice; but should there be, I think I can give him a little history that will nip his admiration in the bud!"

"The quicker you do it the better, for it will make it less easy for her to ingratiate herself in his favour, mamma."

"Set your heart at rest and leave me to manage it; and in the meantime be as cheerful and amiable as possible, and above all things avoid showing any ill-will to Berenice in Captain Duncan's presence. I noticed the sullen looks you gave her while at supper, Cora; mind and not repeat them; it's poor policy, my dear."

The next morning Berenice was seated in the recess of a bow-window in the back parlour, darning an unlucky rent in the lace curtains. Mrs. Gordon, with Captain Duncan, were in the front parlour, and, all unaware that Berenice was within sound of their voices, the ensuing conversation took place.

"Mrs. Gordon, who is this young lady with you? this—Berenice, I think you called her?"

"Oh, Berenice; yes; well, I hardly know what to say; she's a distant relative of ours, however."

"Ah! a relative? I did not know that. I should judge her to be a rather superior sort of girl."

"You are quite right; she is a girl of good natural parts, but she's very peculiar—very, indeed!"

"Ah! indeed! I did not observe it."

"Oh, very—what can you think of a girl, or woman, more properly speaking, with good, uncommon abilities, who prefers, rather than exert herself, to dream away her life, a burden upon her friends; for so distant is our relationship, we should pass in the world for nothing more than friends; I do not speak of this that we are unwilling, only that it is characteristic of her; and, added to this, she has the most ungovernable temper; my poor Cora has undergone martyrdom almost, daily, since she came to us, to say nothing of myself."

"You surprise me, Mrs. Gordon; why, her style and manners do not belong, usually, to such sort of people; and from the little I've seen of her, I judged her to be unusually amiable."

"It pains me to say it; but the truth is best; unusually artful, would best describe her."

Berenice sat with her hands clasped in an agony of pain and humiliation; and then the thought of

discovery. What should she do? A sudden resolve—she would glide softly to the other window, which opened upon the terrace, and pass out; acting upon this she did so; but before she had left the sound of their voices, she heard:

"Hark! Captain Duncan, did you not hear the rustle of a dress, and a cat-like tread? It is dreadful to have an eavesdropper about—never to feel safe a moment in your own house! So young and pretty, and to be so unprincipled! Poor child—poor Berenice! I pity her!"

Time would fail me to tell the plots to strengthen the false estimate of Berenice's character given to Captain Duncan; but that gentleman did not show any change in his manner to her; there seemed a lurking admiration in his respectful bearing towards the unprotected, and, as he now saw, unhappy orphan. But oh, the bitter hours to her! I can think of no position more galling to the spirit, than to be the subject of misrepresentation; to walk daily before people, and be thus misjudged; to be thought guilty of the very deeds you most despise; to be accounted wanting in moral integrity, when your whole heart and life is based upon the one desire to be just, pure, tender, faithful, and forgiving, and to feel that your accusers are wanting these very attributes they ascribe the lack of in you. To fully sympathize with Berenice in this trial, one must have learned it first from bitter experience. The soul that can bear such suffering and not sink, must look above for strength; thus only can it be borne.

One afternoon, Berenice, weary and sick at heart, left the house, and sauntered away to a pleasant grove a few minutes' walk from home; she seated herself upon a mossy stone under her favourite tree, threw her hat upon the ground, and dropping her face into her hands that lay so helplessly upon her lap, her stifling sobs came faster and faster; she felt so worn, so weary, so hunted down! So completely lost was she in her great sorrow, she saw nothing, heard nothing, until suddenly recalled to herself by a hand softly laid upon her shoulder, and the words, in a voice so filled with tender kindness:

"Berenice—Miss Stafford, what is it distresses you so deeply? Will you not let me become your friend?"

She raised her eyes, still brimming with tears, and looked into the clear, honest eyes of Captain Duncan, and being a woman of sudden impulses, she laid her trembling hand in his as readily as a child, saying:

"Yes, Captain Duncan, I will, for oh, I am sorely in need of a friend, for the friendship of many I dare not trust, and yet I am not naturally suspicious. But how can you feel the slightest regard for me, thinking of me as you must?"

"Stay, Miss Stafford! I do not base my opinion of men or women upon others' opinions. Will you trust me with your story?"

Berenice opened her heart to him, sitting there with the warm summer sunshine sifting through the trees. This confidence lightened her grief, and when she went into the house she felt stronger to carry her "cross."

"One minute, Berenice—Miss Stafford," said Captain Duncan, several days after, "I am to leave tomorrow for India; I have been summoned unexpectedly. Will you write to me by every steamer? I should prize your letters as I would—a very dear sister's."

"Yes, Captain Duncan."

The voice was as clear as a bell, but her face grew white to the lips, and the hand shook as it was laid in his for the last time; for the carriage was waiting that was to take her to a friend's to pass the night with a sick child.

For three months she received letters in reply to her own; then they stopped coming. She wrote two more, but no word from Captain Duncan reached her; then womanly delicacy forbade any farther effort on her part. Another humiliating cup to drain—poor Berenice!

One year passed, and though Berenice had tried to bear up under her accumulating sorrows, she was beginning to look sadly changed; heart, brain, and nerve had been too severely taxed, and were now calling for the rest so long denied. This day on which we write, she was utterly unable to keep up, and unloosing her long hair, she laid over her head a napkin dipped in ice-water, and pressing her throbbing temples upon her pillow, she soon forgot her pain in sleep. When she awoke, it was with a painful start, as if frightened, and springing up in bed, she met the malignant gaze of her cousin Cora. For a moment they looked steadily into each other's eyes; then Cora sneered:

"My pretty cousin, we have just had a call from Captain Duncan, who returned from India a week since. Is not the fact of his not inquiring for you, coupled with his disregard of your letters, a little significant, sweet Berenice?"

This taunting speech ended, Cora walked from the room, and Berenice heard the words so cruelly wounding to her sensitive pride, repeated to her Aunt Evelyn, who was apparently waiting for her daughter outside the door.

"Only to think that this insult was planned between my aunt and cousin! It is too much—and oh, Captain Duncan, Captain Duncan!"

And here Berenice's voice assumed a wailing sound, and the trembling hands were pressed to her throbbing temples; then she buried her head in the pillows, as though she would fain shut out all sights and sounds of earth, and in bitterness of spirit prayed for death. When the first wild tumult of feeling was past, she arose from her recumbent position, re-arranged her hair, bathed her face in ice-water, and thus refreshed, seated herself at an open window, and gave herself up to thought.

"No," at last she said, "I will not believe that Captain Duncan is so utterly false and cruel; he never offered his love, but he proffered me friendship, and I am as worthy of that now as ever, and I will not leave my aunt's roof. It will be wrong to break my promise to remain, and it may be construed as evidence against me. I've suffered for six years, and one year more will make me free."

When Berenice went down to tea, both her aunt and cousin were surprised to see her looking so much improved since the morning; for some reason she had dressed herself in a soft, delicate pink muslin that particularly became her, and the ruche at the throat was held in place by a white moss-rose bud; her face wore a sweetly serene expression, not easily accounted for, to her Aunt Evelyn or Cora; they had not learned that when heaven is for us, no weak creatures can make us truly afraid.

A week passed by, and Berenice neither heard nor saw anything of Captain Duncan, but one morning she was surprised by these words from her Aunt Evelyn:

"Berenice, we are to have a few friends to-morrow evening, and probably Captain Duncan will be of the number; it will not look well for you to absent yourself entirely, but under the peculiar circumstance of Captain Duncan's relations and your own delicacy will forbid anything like freedom in your treatment of each other. A formal greeting, and a casual bow in passing, will be all you should allow to a man who has shown to you by his actions that he has ceased to desire your particular acquaintance; indeed, I think from the first you forced yourself upon him."

Berenice's cheek and brow made a burning protest against this stinging injustice, but, as usual, she knew her safest refuge from more indignities was her silence; with trembling fingers she put the finishing stitches in her aunt's head-dress, and then gladly escaped to her chamber. Scarcely was she seated, when she heard Cora's rustling step in the hall, and then the door was thrown open, and her cousin came in with a silk dress upon her arm, and seating herself where she could watch Berenice closely, she said:

"Well, Berenice, what do you think of this party, for it is to be a party, though mamma says a few friends? and what will you wear?"

"I've not given that a thought," replied Berenice, coldly.

"Well, it's high time you did. Why do you not unlock that old iron-bound trunk? Perhaps you'll find some Cinderella gifts—a satin gown and a pumpkin coach, who knows? Come, let's see!"

Now, this old iron-bound trunk was Berenice's only stronghold; in no other place could she feel sure of a single possession, for she knew that everything, even to her letters, was surreptitiously examined, but this trunk had a peculiar spring-lock, the location of which was only known to herself, and often as Cora had tried to find entrance, she had retreated baffled.

Finding Berenice paid no attention to her request, she spread the silk dress she held, upon the bed, saying:

"Well, I supposed you'd sit here dreaming until the last minute, and then come down looking like a drowsy, so I've brought you one of my old silks; with a little cleaning and some fresh lace, it will look better than your old white muslin."

"Thank you," was Berenice's reply, in a quiet voice, but there was a flash and sparkle in her gray eyes, as she lifted her head with a queenly air, not unobserved by Cora.

"Now that you are provided for," added Cora, rising, "mamma and I wish your assistance; so be good enough to come to my room at once."

All that day, and all the next, until four o'clock in the afternoon, Berenice toiled wearily over her Aunt Evelyn's and Cora's finery, and then in weariness she sought her chamber, to make herself ready for the dreaded ordeal.

Pushing the bolt in the door, she went to the old

iron-bound trunk, touched the magic spring, and the lid flew open. With tremulous hands she took from its depths silks and satins of rare and costly texture, some that had been her grandmother's, and others of more recent date, that had graced the beautiful form of her mother, but she laid them all aside as too costly, and too far from the then prevailing style, until she came to a delicate, rose-coloured crape. Hurriedly replacing the others, with skilful fingers she soon made the necessary alterations, finishing it at the throat and at the sleeves, which were short, with a simple ruche; then she unbound her beautiful hair, allowing it to flow in glossy, rippling waves from her brow, and fall in a shiny mass of curls over a comb at the back of her head, these held in place by a mother-of-pearl arrow. Her dress, which, upon trial, did justice to both her skill and her superb form, she fastened at the throat with a pearl cluster-pin, from which drooped some scarlet berries, half-hidden around their glossy green leaves, and this one little touch had a wonderfully fine effect.

"Berenice! Berenice!"—the voice was imperious—"are you not ready to come down? I need you."

"I cannot, Cora. I had your word, as well as your mother's, that I should not be disturbed again to-night."

"Well, then, let me in!"

"No; I've given you all my time for two days, and I must have these few minutes left to myself."

"But I want to see that you are looking so that you do not disgrace us—"

"Never mind about my looks; you cannot come in."

"You will repent it, Miss Berenice!" and then the offended girl swept down the stairs.

Half an hour after the guests had assembled, while Mrs. Gordon and Cora were playing their parts of hostesses, a murmur of—"Is she not beautiful?" met their ears, and turning towards the door, there stood Berenice in her youthful beauty; it was as though some sweet picture had stepped from its frame, such a strange light was there in her large gray eyes, a brilliant flush upon her usually pale cheeks, relieved by the ruche at her throat, her dress falling about her in such soft, fleecy folds, so different from the rustling silks of the other ladies, and added to all this, the sweet, quiet dignity of her bearing; all, while they admired, were touched with a deeper feeling than simple admiration. But Mrs. Gordon's and Cora's hearts were filled with bitterest hatred.

When Captain Duncan advanced to meet Berenice, she marked at once the change in his manner; his former kind cordiality had given place to a cold hauteur almost unbearable to her; but she gave no sign of her feelings, and after a few common-place remarks, turned from him. With an aching heart she accepted the attentions of their guests, longing for release, and, while they were at table, she stole away from the noise and glare into the coolness of the conservatory, and pressing her cheek against the glass, she said, half-aloud:

"Oh, it is so dreadful to be deceived, when I have so trusted in him—Captain Duncan! oh, Captain Duncan!"

"Berenice!" And now she was aware he must have heard her words, for Captain Duncan was at her side, had sought the conservatory before herself, but was screened from her sight by a tall oleander bush.

She turned in haste to leave, vexed that she had so humbled herself before him.

"Stay, Berenice! tell me the meaning of this. Your words give the lie to your actions. Why did you not answer my letters after the first two, for I've written every month since I left, and why did you refuse to see me, when I called expressly to see you?"

All at once Berenice saw it all; her letters had been intercepted; she had been refused to him upon their own responsibility, and all for a purpose.

"I have received but two letters," she replied, "nor did I hear of your call until you had left; there has been treachery, but it pains me to dwell on it. Mrs. Gordon is my own aunt, and in some things has been kind; let the rest pass; we must still be friends," and she extended her hand to Captain Duncan.

"Friends, Berenice? Have you no more to give me than that? Do you know that I love you, that I loved you after the first week of my visit here? I want you, my darling—will you not be my wife?"

The two fluttering hands lay in his, the beautiful head nestled in his bosom, the motherless heart knew that at last it had found its true earthly rest, and how inestimably sweet, after such bitter persecution, to look forward to the shelter of her "own vine and fig tree, with none to molest or make afraid."

The next morning, at breakfast, a costly diamond solitaire sparkled on the orphan's finger, and this was the way Mrs. Gordon and Cora first learned of Berenice's betrothal.

H. N. H.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF HEART DISEASE IN ENGLAND.—In an appendix to a little brochure with the rather sensational title of "Hurried to Death," in which sufferers from heart disease are again cautioned as to the danger of hurry and excitement, Mr. Haviland has entered into the question of the geographical distribution of heart disease in England and Wales, and argues that the proportion of deaths from cardiac mischief varies in a uniform manner with latitude, longitude, and aspect of the maritime and physical character of localities. It is asserted that the greatest number of deaths from the cause stated occur in the southern coast counties, and the least in the western parts of England. The northern rank second, and the eastern third. It farther appears that the mortality increases as we trace it from the sea-girt island (Wight) to the land-bound midland counties, showing the value of sea-air in the class of disease under notice. The southern part of England has most heart disease, it is asserted, because it receives the least amount of sea air; the English Channel being narrow, and the land air flowing in from the Continent. We are unable to follow the matter farther at present. If Mr. Haviland's observations turn out to be correct, they will open up a new field in the therapeutics of cardiac disease.

EYESIGHT.

At the age of seventy years a name honoured and revered on both continents writes, "I am now writing this with my eyes closed, by the aid of a machine and even this at some peril of blindness. My general health is perfect, and I am able to do as much work as ever, without fatigue. My only difficulty is with my eyes, and this is a serious and alarming one." To have good health, and to be capable both as to mind and body of doing full work, and yet not be allowed to do any, and this to have been the case, more or less, for ten years past, and to last for all the life to come, as it certainly will, is a terrible calamity; a clear loss of twenty years labour to the world. This condition was induced by the person getting up to study and write at four o'clock winter and summer for a series of years. A beneficent Providence has arranged that the glare of light shall come on very gradually in the morning and that as gradually shall it depart into darkness in the evening.

The painfulness of coming instantly into a bright light is familiar to all. And yet after the eyes have been closed in the perfect darkness of sleep for seven or eight hours, to be instantly exposed to a bright gas or other artificial light, for early study is practised by many, and without knowing it very many students thus prepare themselves for an early impairment of sight, to say nothing of the bodily suffering, of mental chafing and disquietude, and loss of time and money. There is no gain, in the long run, by using the eyes to read or write after sundown or before sunrise and breakfast; it may be done with a measure of impunity in a few cases; but in nine cases out of ten disaster will follow: in no case is night study an economy of time, nor is it a necessity as an habitual thing. Night is the time for rest, and both body and brain, especially as to students, require all the sleep the system will take; they ought never to be waked up; nature will infallibly do that when she has had her fill, and to shorten sleep is to shorten life; half the time of daylight is as long as any man ought to spend in hard study.

SOVEREIGNS IN THE TWENTIETH YEAR OF THEIR REIGN.—By a strange coincidence, three sovereigns have just entered on the twentieth year of their reign, namely, the Emperors of France and Austria and the King of Italy, who ascended their respective thrones within a few months of each other. Francis Joseph, in virtue of the abdication of his uncle, Ferdinand I., and his father, Francis Charles, ascended the throne on the 2nd December, 1848; Louis Napoleon's reign may be said to have commenced when he was elected President in June, 1848; and Victor Emmanuel's father died in July, 1849.

THE ENVELOPE TRADE.—About forty years ago there lived at Brighton a bookseller and stationer of the name of S. K. Brewer, and he used to place in his shop-window piles of paper, beginning at the largest up to the then smallest size, 16mo.; but to finish off the pile he cut cards so as to bring them up to a point. Ladies used to go in and ask for that "dear little paper," which induced him to cut paper in small sizes. Then came the difficulty of the place for address, and the result was he invented the envelope, and had metal plates made for cutting them to shape and sizes. This just pleased the ladies, and orders came to him for the little paper and envelopes from all parts. This at length became such a demand upon his time, that he got Dobbs and Co., of London, to make them for him.



[THE COUSINS.]

MAGGIE MASON.

MAGGIE MASON was bored to death. Certainly Haydown was a very quiet old place; and perhaps it was only natural that she should find it difficult to reconcile herself to the change from the gay life she always led in London. She was only at Haydown from dire necessity. Her Aunt Emma, with whom she had her home, had gone to France with her own daughter, Emma Dewey, closing her house, therefore, for the summer. Maggie Mason being unfortunately restricted in a great many ways, by reason of being a very poor girl, found herself left out of the party. Her other aunt, Mrs. Steele, always was ready to welcome her to Haydown, whenever Maggie was so disposed; and to Haydown, therefore, Maggie came.

It was a sweet old place, situated on a rising ground. The river breeze was apt to blow freshly across the wheat and oat fields, and through the trees amongst which the low, long house, with its wide, white verandah running the whole length of the front and on one side, nestled. There was a lawn in front, where grew quantities of roses; and a mass of honeysuckle clambered up one side of the terrace and twisted itself across the top, and threw up odorous arms into the bedroom windows. The place was in perfect order, but had no pretensions whatever in the landscape-gardening line. Mrs. Steele took care of her own flowers, with the assistance of a man, who also drove the carriage. Everything was consequently in excellent order; weeds and rubbish were an abomination to Mrs. Steele.

Maggie Mason sat on the step of the terrace, the morning after her arrival, and fanned herself. She disliked the country. She detested the flies, the gnats and the ants; she detested the loneliness. She considered it a very hard fate that she had not

shared the delights of France with her cousin Emma. How should she pass the next two months? She felt thoroughly dull, melancholy and cross.

And just then Millie Steele came out on the porch with her basket of work, and sat down by her cousin's side.

Maggie turned round and smiled, and made room for her, as pleasantly as though her reflections had been of the most agreeable description.

"You industrious being," she said. "You will be for ever putting me to the blush, I predict. I am always idle in warm weather. What are you making? Cravats? Ah, let me help you. I have a talent for making cravats, I believe. Who is this one for? For one of your beaux, of course. There, tell me all about him, Millie."

Maggie had taken the piece of bright blue silk out of Millie's hand, and was going to work upon it, without stopping for leave or license. That was her way. She was accustomed always to do exactly as she pleased. Millie disliked that way very much indeed, but Millie was a young person of great discretion and good sense, and rarely, if ever, ran counter to her cousin's whims and oddities.

"Mr. Edgar will be very much flattered," she said. "You will have to give it to him yourself, when he comes this evening."

"Oh, George Edgar! He has always been away when I have been here before. I had forgotten. No, Millie, I won't interfere. He wouldn't care to wear the cravat, I dare say, unless he thought you made it. Is he coming to-night? Are you going to have company, Millie?"

"Only some of the girls. I asked them to come to make your acquaintance. Our country tea parties don't amount to much."

"They are very pleasant," answered Maggie, brightening up. "What are you going to wear? I shall have to alter that white organdie of mine. It

is on one side. I like white. I always wear it when I can, in summer. In fact, I look better in white than in anything else. You ought to be thankful you haven't red hair, Millie. It is such a bother. There are so many colours one can't wear with red hair. I wish I had your hair. It is perfectly superb when you let it down, it is so gloriously thick and long. Mine is thick enough; but the colour!"

"I like the colour," said Millie; "and your hair waves and curls so beautifully."

Maggie put up her little white hands and passed them over her heavy wavy hair, combed up from her white throat and neck, and arranged so prettily. There was something very picturesque and attractive about her, something which reminded one of an old picture;—the fair, white complexion—the heavy, burnished mass of hair taken back from the face—the blue eyes with their long golden lashes—the red lips—the peculiar pose of the head.

Then Maggie Mason's manner was striking and pleasing as well, although some people might object to the effort with which she ran off into happy little laughs, or went forward to greet an acquaintance with sundry little airy motions, and droppings of her graceful head first on one side and then on another. A critical observer could see easily that she never lost sight of herself.

On the other hand, Millie Steele was unconsciousness itself. She was tall and rather graceful, with a lady-like, straightforward manner. Her great adornment and crowning glory was the mass of brown hair to which Maggie has already referred. Otherwise she was no beauty, not even good-looking; but a sensible, agreeable girl, very popular, and very deservedly so, with a pleasant, good-humoured expression of face, blue eyes that looked straight at you, a mouth that could close itself very firmly, or else could give a frank, delightful smile. This morning she wore her composed, well-balanced look. Maggie Mason always had a subduing effect upon her.

The guests arrived early—half-a-dozen girls—pleasant, fresh, bright country girls, each one of whom gave that vain Miss Maggie a pang of envy, as she approached in her floating summer drapery. After all, the neighbourhood was not such a benighted region as appeared on first sight. These girls were not one bit behind the age. Query: Is the instinct for dress ever dormant in the feminine mind?

"Lives there a girl with soul so dead,
Who never to herself hath"

debated the intricacies of the latest styles—who was never fired by the noble ambition of having her things made in the newest way, and who would not in the bottom of her heart object to looking like a dowdy? Perhaps this is the reason that in this advanced stage of civilization the fashions seem to travel by magnetic telegraph. Or is there a spiritual medium for disseminating the latest edicts from the fountain-head? Certainly there seems to be a subtle magnetism by means of which girls in town and country appear simultaneously in dresses of the same length, in hats of the same shape, in cloaks of the same colour. Maggie Mason respected these Somerset girls from the bottom of her heart for their great success, with such slender advantages as they possessed.

Four or five young men completed the party. Mannie Pearce came with her two brothers, Frank Steele drove his sisters over, and the two brothers Edgar came on horseback.

Maggie instantly marked George Edgar for her own; he was the best looking, decidedly, of the party; besides, Willie Pearce was engaged to one of the Steele girls, and his brother was a stupid middle-aged man. Frank was nothing but a boy. Moreover, George Edgar was decidedly the beau of the county; he was rich, to begin with, and he was disposed to be quite a ladies' man. He had very handsome blue eyes, and an irresistible way of using them. Maggie engaged him in a flirtation forthwith, laughed a great deal, tossed her head frequently, and toyed with her chain. George was entertained in the first place, and flattered in the second. What man is not, when a pretty woman devotes herself to please him? Her light nonsense and trifling amused him immensely. Maggie was an adept at that sort of thing. She could run on, laugh and tease about absolutely nothing, longer than anyone else I ever knew in my life.

Millie Steele watched the progress of the flirtation with a great deal of quiet scorn. Perhaps a little pique and exasperation was mixed up with it. George Edgar had always been her property—had always had eyes and ears only for her; it could not fail therefore to be a little provoking to see Maggie walk right into her own especial domain as though she were to the manner born.

"Miss Millie, don't forget my cravat," Mr. Edgar

said, when the whole party were seated around the tea-table. "I think that I have a right to insist upon your being as good as your word. I won the wager fairly."

"You must ask Maggie," she said, with one of her honest smiles. "She undertook the manufacture of the article. Maggie, did you accomplish the undertaking?"

"Now, Millie!" laughed Maggie, rattling the heavy links of her chain, and toying with her teaspoon. "Mr. Edgar wasn't to know who made it. I told Millie she must not tell you. Indeed, she is too bad. I don't believe you'll care to wear it now."

Of course Mr. Edgar protested that he would. Millie was helping the strawberries at the time, and therefore very busily engaged; but she could not help listening with all her might to what the young man said. She hated herself for the horrid feelings in her heart at the moment. Was this jealousy? How wicked in her almost to hate Maggie Mason, as she sat there, glancing up into Mr. Edgar's blue eyes, and blushing and pouting.

"I shall consider a cravat made by you too precious to be worn."

This was what George Edgar said. Millie almost caught the words. However, she need not have strained her ears. Maggie, flushed with the pride of conquest, poured forth, for Millie's benefit, all Mr. Edgar's soft speeches that night before the two girls fell asleep. Poor Millie dismally reflected that he had never made a soft speech to her during their whole acquaintance.

There was a great deal of laughing and talking around the tea-table.

Such gay, fair faces, such eager, happy voices, such an impression of youth, happiness, and innocence! And yet if we could have read the story of each of those young hearts, at each one would be gnawing some cankerworm of regret or disappointment, or pride or selfishness. Certainly no one wore so calm an expression as Millie Steele, and certainly no one carried so heavy a heart. In all her life, it seemed to her, she had never found it so difficult to feel calm, peaceful, and untroubled. Maggie Mason had always irritated her, had always ruffled, provoked and annoyed her, and this evening her annoyance seemed to be deepening and strengthening.

There was music after tea, and Millie played one of her favourite pieces, and played it very well, too, with her usual fine execution and delightful touch. George Edgar had never professed to care for music, so that it was not surprising that he lounged in the doorway while she played, and talked to Maggie who stood in front of him, her arm around Mary Pearce's waist; but afterwards, when someone asked Maggie to sing, he came with her to the piano and leaned over her, trifled over the pages of the music-book, and said a number of things in her ear, which no one else could possibly overhear, in a very low tone of voice.

Then Maggie sang that very foolish and sentimental little song, "Love's Chidings," with very sentimental emphasis, and really made more of it than could have been expected. Then she would sing absolutely nothing else, but spent the rest of the evening walking up and down the moonlit verandah with Mr. George.

Millie behaved admirably, performed her duties of hostess, turned off as best she could the laughing attacks her friends made upon her, as to what she had done to George Edgar—why wouldn't she speak to the poor fellow; it was too bad—and so on. Certainly, George Edgar himself had no reason to suppose that he had caused her a moment's uneasiness. She bade him good-night as pleasantly as though they had seen as much of each other as usual all the evening; and, in consequence, the young man went away with an undefined impression that young ladies were very variable and uncertain. Perhaps he had been coxcomb enough to wonder several times, during the course of the evening, whether or no Millie was watching him and her cousin, and how she liked it.

George Edgar went away with yet another fact impressed upon his consciousness—that he was fascinated with Miss Maggie Mason. He was a sensible young man enough, but he was literally intoxicated by her many little coquetries and allurements. She charmed him as Millie Steele had never done in all her life. I believe he actually sat up late that night inditing a sonnet to her eyebrows. George was a poet-fancier, and, spurred on by this novel madness, discovered that he, too, could "string rhyme on rhyme."

Early the next morning found Mr. George at Haydown. Maggie had mentioned to him that she was fond of riding, and he came over to offer her a horse of his for her use as long as she was in the country. Maggie accepted with alacrity. And the first ride came off that afternoon.

Through the whole course of his flirtation with Maggie, George and Millie kept up their ancient friendship. In fact, Millie was too placid, too equable, too well-balanced, to have even a dispute with a friend, except on very strong grounds. After that first night she succeeded in ruling even her own spirit—verily the most difficult task of all. She accepted the situation of affairs with calm philosophy; she continued to talk about books to George Edgar when they met, and to refer to various arguments and conversations they had had together, in the most natural way in the world. She continued to exercise forbearance with Maggie, and to control her own impatience occasionally, when Maggie was more than usually aggravating. Many and many a time she would go and sit by herself and smooth her ruffled feathers when Maggie had rubbed her all the wrong way, as Maggie was for ever doing.

Very naturally, Maggie found this love-making and riding very pleasant and exciting. Haydown was no longer the insufferably stupid place she had fancied it would be. She lived now in a little whirl of pleasure and gratified vanity. As time passed on, she found herself growing interested in the subject, just as a scientific man becomes interested in a chemical experiment. She was only eighteen, and this was her first serious love affair. She was disposed to like Mr. Edgar—disposed to be delighted and gratified with his fervour and devotion, and, moreover, as time passed by, disposed to fall naturally into the order of things. There seemed to be no good reason why she should not encourage the young man and his attentions. George Edgar, you must remember, was a handsome, stalwart fellow, well-educated and well-born, with a talent for playing the devoted.

She continued to make Millie her confidant—partly because it was her nature to talk to someone, partly because from the first she had taken a certain pride in giving Millie to understand that George Edgar was utterly and entirely her prisoner. She was a selfish little thing naturally, and very thoughtless. It rarely occurred to her that other people could suffer pain. It was not natural to her to place herself in the position of any one else. And, added to all this, Millie had behaved with so much discretion that Maggie never began to realize how severely her cousin had felt the whole affair.

So passed away the summer. I am not able to make a heroine of Millie Steele in the least; I don't want you to think of her at all as a broken-hearted, lovelorn damsel. She had too much good sense and pride for anything of that kind. She had, as I have told you before, a very well-balanced mind. It would never have occurred to her to be any the less useful, bright, or contented, because things had not happened to her exactly as she could have wished. After all, her intimacy with George Edgar had been of the most practical and common-sense nature; whereas Maggie's was a genuine, regular-built love affair. She knew that if Maggie was not engaged to George, it was simply and solely because Maggie did not so choose. In fact, George had urged his suit repeatedly; and as the time for Maggie's return to London approached, implored her to leave him with the promise that next summer she would return there as his wife.

Maggie was to leave Haydown about the middle of that month, and, by her Aunt Emma's very urgent request, Millie was to accompany her. It was Millie's first visit from home for any length of time, and consequently quite an event in her life.

The cousins left the country together, Maggie drowned in tears, but comforted by the assurance that her lover would certainly follow her during the course of the next month.

To tell the truth, marrying George Edgar was not quite coming up to the height of her day-dreams. He was all very well here, in the country; but how would it be in London, where things were different, where one constantly saw gayer, richer people? She could not make up her mind to the country life. She wanted to live in town, and go to parties, and employ the fashionable dressmaker. Town-life was so much more satisfactory. To tell the truth, now that Miss Maggie led the quiet, easy life which was the order of things at Haydown, she forgot the vexations and cares at her Aunt Emma's. She forgot that there she had often decided she would marry any one, if only to secure a home and an independence.

Emma Dewey, of course, had a great deal to say about her summer experiences. She had been brought up to precisely the life she was now leading. She understood thoroughly all the little ins and outs of their particular set; she knew all about all the people she met in society; she found no occupation so engrossing as dressing, dancing, and visiting. Millie felt herself altogether lost and strange at first. She could not get accustomed to the way her two cousins viewed things. It all seemed to her so un-

interesting, stale, flat, and unprofitable. Gradually, however, she fell into her own occupations, varied, of course, by a share in all the amusements that came up, early in the season as it was.

"Invitations for us all to go out to Mrs. Rogers's on Thursday," drawled Emma Dewey, one morning at breakfast. "You know she lives in one of the handsomest houses. It is to be an outdoor affair. She is taking advantage of this warm weather. Mamma, we will go, of course. I must have a new dress; mamma, I shall get up something new, like that short dress of Mrs. Foster's. I shall go out this morning to see about it. This is Monday, so that I have no time to lose. Millie, what will you wear?"

Here Maggie came in, and picked up the cards lying on the table.

"Oh, how perfectly lovely!" she said. "Could anything be more delightful! Aunt Emma, I suppose we shall all go?"

"I don't see how you can go, Maggie," Emma put in. "You have nothing but that dowdy old organdie to wear."

"I might alter it," Maggie said. "Oh, I wouldn't miss it for anything. I would rather get a new dress for this, than for anything else."

"That is quite out of the question, Maggie," her aunt said, coldly. "You have exceeded your allowance already. You are disposed to be a great deal too extravagant."

"Besides, it makes such a crowd," said Emma. "Three girls for mamma to chaperone."

"I don't care to go in the least," Millie put in quickly. "I really do not. I should not enjoy myself. I should feel like a cat in a strange home."

"Now, Emma," began Maggie, "how ridiculous you are. Don't these three Miss Smiths always go about together? And there are three of those Bixby girls. I, for one, don't mean to stay at home."

"Maggie, you never have a thought for anyone but yourself," replied her Aunt Emma, sharply. "I wonder at you, before Millie, too. One would think that you would rather sacrifice your own gratification to her, just for once in your life. It is as well that the matter should be decided once for all. There will only be room in the carriage for four, Millie and Emma, and your uncle and myself. You should try to overcome your unfortunate determination always to be first in everything. Emma, my dear, I would advise you to try Madame Legra for this dress you intend to have made. They say she gives great satisfaction."

Poor Maggie! She tried hard to retain her composure. She trifled with her spoon in an indifferent way as she could assume; she devoted her whole energies to cutting up the slice of bread on her plate into a dozen little triangular bits. She replied to a question which Millie put to her, with her usual little airy affectation. But her lip pouted ominously, and the colour rushed up into her face, as it only did when she was very much irritated and provoked. She made a very slight breakfast, and then got up and left the room.

"Suppose you take another cup of tea as a sedative," suggested Emma, with a disagreeable little laugh. "You look quite excited. Your face is just the colour of your hair."

Maggie walked down the hall, quite overcome with anger and mortification. She was certainly a good-tempered girl, whatever her other faults might be. She had had severe provocation this morning, and it really seemed to her that her troubles were greater than she could bear. She turned into the parlour, and was standing staring vacantly out of the window, seeing nothing and trying to keep back the tears—crying always disfigured her so dreadfully—when she heard a step behind her, and turning round, saw George Edgar.

She had never been so glad to see anyone in all her life before. She gave him both her hands, in the excess of her pleasure. She was not quite herself yet, and she probably was more disposed to be grateful and pleased with his evident delight at seeing her again, than she would have been had he happened to have seen her under ordinary circumstances. It seemed to her that on that morning she was at war with the whole world except himself.

He had come up for a whole week. Instantly Maggie recovered her spirits, and decided with eager haste that she might crowd a great deal of excitement and amusement into those few days. She never proposed for a moment to initiate him into any of her woes and trials. She had no intention that he should think of her except as being perfectly bright and happy. It was a part of her course of action, invariably, to give her lovers the impression that she was conferring a favour, not receiving it. But as she sat on the sofa, and George talked on about his affairs, and about the news and country gossip in Somerset, Maggie the while was perfecting

a little plan by means of which she could get him to drive her out to Mrs. Rogers's party.

How she smiled at him, and exerted all her fascinations, and made the little speeches which she knew he would be sure to admire—and how enchanted George was, and in what a tumult of admiration and delight he walked away, having made an engagement with his lady-love to drive her out to Druid Hill Park that afternoon.

Maggie was so confident that she could make him do exactly as she pleased, that she ran upstairs to her own room, without loss of time, to ransack her possessions in view of the party on Thursday. She was very handy, and she really devised a pretty little toilette out of her slender materials. She would invest largely in blue ribbons, and trim up a rather *passed* white dress in some original way, and wear a jaunty shepherdess hat. How would a short skirt, elaborately ruffled, look? She was willing to devote all her spare time between this day and Thursday to hemming the ruffles. She counted over the money in her pocket-book, and decided that she could make that money answer, without applying to her Aunt Emma for more, by goring, managing and economizing the old dress she proposed to convert into a new one. She was so glad, that day at least, that she was not a tall girl. Moreover, to conclude, she would keep her own counsel.

George Edgar quite realized her expectations. He was at her beck and call morning, noon, and night; and it really required a good deal of generalship on Maggie's part to succeed in getting her work—that wonderful dress—accomplished at odd times. Finally Maggie succeeded in paving the way for George to ask her to go to the *fitte* at Mrs. Rogers's; and she also so arranged things with him, that he made the request to Mrs. Dewey himself, that he might have the pleasure of escorting Miss Maggie to the party. Mrs. Dewey was obliged to accede to the arrangement, and Maggie had the satisfaction of feeling that she had carried the day, in spite of the opposition of an unkind world. She had not even taken Millie into her confidence; although Millie had discussed the matter with her, consoled with her, and offered to help her to get ready and to lend her anything of her own, should their aunt be persuaded to revoke her decision. But Maggie had refused. She really had a very strong will, and a great deal of determination, although they were employed only on matters of small moment. She considered herself to have been aggrieved, and she was determined to keep herself aloof in future from her aunt and cousins. She would hold no parley with them whatever.

She nodded the airiest farewell to the two girls and her aunt, who were just getting into the carriage, as she drove off with George on Thursday afternoon. She enjoyed the pleasing consciousness that she looked as elegant as Emma, and that her home-made dress was as effective as Emma's extravagant one; and, besides, Emma never could make a beauty of herself. She was thin, sallow, and dyspeptic-looking under any circumstances; she was no beauty even this afternoon, despite her elaborately-crimped hair, and long Alexandra curl, and the forced smile throned on her lips. Even Millie looked better, and no one would ever think of calling Millie pretty.

It was a very gay scene in Mrs. Rogers's beautiful grounds. Two or three games of croquet had been arranged, and the young people were laughing and flirting to the top of their bent within the magic rings of wire netting enclosing each party. Could any one fail to be happy and to enjoy the music and the dancing, the gay voices, and the glorious beauty of the October afternoon?

In fact, Miss Maggie Mason was decidedly the belle of the occasion; she was amply rewarded and recompensed for the efforts she had made to get there. She found herself by no means thrown upon George Edgar's kind offices, and in fact was so independent of that young man as to cause him various pangs and misgivings. She was deep in two or three flirtations before the sun went down.

But George Edgar's most serious rival was not presented to Maggie until towards the end of the evening. Sydney Wilmer monopolized her from that moment. Sydney Wilmer quite turned her foolish little head. It was of Sydney Wilmer alone that she thought; it was for Sydney Wilmer alone that she lived from that day forth; until the young man had declared his passion and was her accepted lover. Little butterflies like Maggie Mason can have absorbing passions, as well as stronger natures. Perhaps the passion comes to them as a kind of moral tonic. The sunshine that is sent, and the clouds with them, come both with their lesson of warning and instruction.

George Edgar did not return to Somerset the happy man he had fondly pictured to himself. He

did not quite despair, however, of his suit, until Millie Steele returned to Haydown, not many weeks later, and brought the news of Maggie's engagement to Mr. Wilmer.

It was a sudden engagement and a hasty marriage. There was no cause for delay, as Mr. Wilmer was a wealthy man, very much in love, and very anxious to hurry forward the marriage. Maggie Mason became Mrs. Wilmer before the close of the year. She had all her dearest hopes fulfilled. It seemed to her that there was absolutely nothing left for her to desire; she had married the man of her choice; the good things of life had fallen to her share; she was in just the position of all others which she would have chosen, had the choice been left to her.

The disappointment to George Edgar struck deep down at the very roots of his life. It seemed to him that there was nothing left worth living for. And, humanly speaking, there was not. All his hopes were centred in Maggie.

George and Millie always continued to be excellent friends. Mrs. Wilmer led a gay life in town, and was too utterly engrossed with the business of pleasure to care to visit, or even to correspond with her quiet country relations.

But finally the spell of prosperity that had seemed to surround her was broken. Mr. Wilmer died very suddenly, leaving his widow, instead of the large fortune which her friends had expected her to inherit, in very straitened circumstances. He had lived very fast, she had been very extravagant, and this was the end.

She wrote to Millie Steele, as soon as she became aware of the condition of affairs, a most deplorable, melancholy letter. The gist of the letter was that she was in wretched health and spirits, that her plans were exceedingly undecided and vague, that she needed advice and guidance. Might she come to Haydown? Would Millie and her aunt receive her—a broken-hearted widow—in her distress?

Mrs. Wilmer came—a fair, elegant-looking woman, in her widow's weeds; toned down since her girlish days, but, nevertheless, still very much the same Maggie.

George Edgar recognized her at once, with a strange unaccustomed feeling at his heart. He caught her eye as she came out of the church, and bowed gravely. Mrs. Wilmer, glancing up at him, gave a sad, sweet smile, and held out her little hand.

"You have not forgotten your friend, Mr. Edgar, I hope?" she said.

"I hope you will come to see Maggie," Millie Steele said, as Mr. Edgar put them into the carriage.

George rode over to Haydown. Mrs. Wilmer was standing on the terrace as he approached, and came forward to receive him; the same sweet face, the same striking individuality, every little gesture and tone with its own especial emphasis. George Edgar positively appreciated the perfection of manner, her delicacy and refinement, even better than he would have done five or six years before, when he had scarcely known the reason why he loved Maggie Mason.

Mrs. Steele was a feeble old lady by this time. She sat in an easy-chair by the open dining-room window. George went up to her presently to speak to her and shake hands. When he turned round again, Millie was standing near him looking at her mother, but Mrs. Wilmer had wandered off down the garden. Perhaps she expected that George would follow her. Millie turned away as his eye caught hers, but he could see that her eyes were full of tears.

"I can't grow accustomed to the thought that my mother is growing old," she said, when they moved away together presently, and a silence somehow fell between them. "I think that it would be a breaking up of my life as well as hers, if she should pass away before my own time comes."

And then George spoke out, and told his tale; told a very different tale, and in very different words, from the one he had told Maggie years before. He took Millie entirely by surprise. She had expected nothing less than this. Strange that the words which, in her early girlhood, she had hoped to hear—which never had been spoken to her then—should be said to her so unexpectedly now. But her thoughts travelled back to those sweet early days, and then forward again, over all the years she had known him, and her heart made the same answer she would have made at eighteen—she accepted him. And as they stood there, the glorious sunset light glowing on Millie's white dress, Mrs. Wilmer came towards them. She held a spray of white clematis in her hand.

"Lovely, isn't it?" she said, holding it up.

"Millie, let me put it in your hair."

Millie submitted, and her cousin twisted it in

bridal-wreath fashion.

"There!" Maggie said, "I've made a bride of you. Mr. Edgar, isn't it becoming?"

And that was Millie's betrothal. Years before that, Maggie would not have been pleased had she been told that she would one day twist a wreath for Millie to grace her troth-plighting with George Edgar. But time, change and trouble had come between all three since then, softening, altering, and reconciling. To two of them life had not brought just what they wished. Perhaps they were none the less satisfied and happy now, because of this.

And here my story closes, having united my two lovers in the orthodox fashion. For the rest let us suppose that our little butterfly friend flitted off to other flower-borders, where she may be even now sipping the sweet-tasted flower-goblets—doubtless gathering honey.

M. L. K.

SIR ALVICK.

CHAPTER XXXV.

HUGH DE LISLE regarded the terrified baronet with eyes full of contemptuous pity for a moment, and then said:

"The proofs of that marriage exist. You need not deny the marriage to me, Sir Alvick Ulster, whatever you may say to others."

"And why not to you as well as to others, young man?"

"Because you know that I am aware your denial would be a useless falsehood. Because I have not, and never have had, any intention to make the truth public. Because I do not threaten to prosecute you for bigamy, nor for murder, nor for anything else. Because were you to confess the truth to me, your confession could not increase the strength of my conviction, that you are the legal husband of Aspa Jarles, if she lives—"

"Oh, then you do not know that she lives?"

"I do not. I have never seen Aspa Jarles, to my knowledge, Sir Alvick."

"You swear you have no share in this conspiracy so suddenly sprung beneath me?"

"I swear it, Sir Alvick," replied Hugh De Lisle, solemnly. "I am not in collusion with Hassan Wharfe, nor with Major Hark Varly, nor with Aspa Jarles, nor with any one else. I am acting for myself, for Hugh De Lisle. I do not know that Aspa Jarles is alive. I do not know when she died, if she be dead. I do know that she was your wife, if she be dead; and that she is your wife, if she be living. I said that I would first prove that she was married to you. Do you dare deny it?"

"You say it will not alter, nor in the slightest degree affect your belief whether I admit the marriage," replied the cautious baronet. "But suppose, since you are so positive and fixed in your belief that I was legally married to Aspa Jarles, that it be true, what then?"

"It remains for me to prove that I am, in all probability, the offspring, the sole offspring, of that marriage," continued Hugh De Lisle. "And remember that I do not desire to force myself upon you as a son and heir."

"I suppose you have no love for Aspa Jarles, even if you do believe her to be your mother?" sneered the baronet.

Hugh De Lisle, with the grace of a practised courtier, lifted his plumed hat from his head, a courtesy he had not deigned to bestow upon the baronet, and said:

"She was my mother, and I uncover my head in respect and honour for that holy name. I would not say one word against her name, be she what she may, or whatever she may have been. She was my mother."

"Come," sneered Sir Alvick, mockingly, "is not as much respect and honour due to your father as to your mother?"

"No!" thundered Hugh De Lisle, with a fierce emphasis that made the baronet start nervously, and the lofty room ring with his powerful tone. "You drove her to be whatever she may have become. You won her maiden love. She was honourable and virtuous, and demanded honourable marriage, and you yielded to her most virtuous demands. You were lawfully made her husband. It was your sworn duty then to protect, to cherish, to love, to respect her. She was your wife! You deceived her. You forced her to believe that she was not your wife; that she was dishonoured, disgraced, degraded—a Magdalen! She fled from you, from her friends, believing that the brand of disgrace was seared upon her fair brow for ever. She fled, and whatever she may have become afterwards, whatever she may be now, the blame, Sir Alvick Ulster, lies at your door. Tell me," added Hugh De Lisle, with cutting scorn in eye, feature, tone, and gesture, "are you a father whom a son may respect and honour?"

The baronet made an attempt to sneer, but the lofty and nobil indignation marked upon the handsome face of Hugh De Lisle crushed his sneer into a stare of unspoken shame.

"I uncover my head as I speak of my mother," continued Hugh De Lisle, haughtily. "She fled to London, and was then, as she supposed, wedded to another, for I was yet unborn, and she desired that her child should not be born without a name. I was born in London—"

"What proof have you of that? What proof that you are the son of Aspa Jarles?" demanded the baronet.

"I have the evidence of Madame Doon, who was present when I was born," replied Hugh De Lisle.

"What proof have you that Madame Doon did not speak falsely?"

"Absence of cause for doing so," replied Hugh De Lisle, promptly. "No one lies without a cause, unless there be such creatures as constitutional liars."

"When you shall have lived to be as old as I am," sneered the baronet, "you will have met with a million of what you term constitutional liars. But let me hear what Madame Doon said. You were present when that essence of impudence, Mr. Hassan Wharfe, averred that he could produce two elderly ladies who were present at the birth of the son of Alvic Ulster and Aspa Jarles—he claimed to be that son, you remember. No doubt one of the two elderly ladies to whom he referred is this same Madame Doon, for I remember that one of the maids of Aspa Jarles, Clara Hart, married the poacher, William Doon. Come, you may be deceived in placing so much credence in the veracity of Madame Doon. Perhaps Mr. Hassan Wharfe has bought up her evidence in his favour. Ah, you have a very cunning rival in Mr. Hassan Wharfe."

"It is not very probable, Sir Alvic," replied Hugh De Lisle, "that I shall ever urge my pretensions or claims for your paternity in a court of law. If half that he and Major Hark Varly said be true, you would do well to remain perfectly quiet, and accede to their demands with what grace you can. I do not believe that Madame Doon had any cause to deceive me, and therefore I do not believe that she spoke falsely. She may have erred in what she said, but I am sure she did so unintentionally."

"You have a right to your opinion, young man. Pray proceed, for it is past one o'clock—nearly two, and I desire some repose at last."

"Madame Doon said that the child of Aspa Jarles and Alvic Ulster was born in London, several months after Aspa Jarles married a man named Ross Chaffton. She afterwards bore a son to Ross Chaffton."

"Ah!" thought the attentive baronet, "I now begin to scent the paternity of either Mr. Hassan Wharfe or Major Hark Varly. I was sure that they were children of Aspa Jarles. I am certain that neither of them is my son."

"Ross Chaffton," continued Hugh De Lisle, still quoting the revelations of Madame Doon, "deceived the unfortunate lady."

"Lady!" sneered the baronet.

"She was my mother, Sir Alvic, and in heart and mind as noble a lady as the mother of Sir Alvic Ulster, or the mother of any other man in England!" replied Hugh De Lisle, sternly. "I know not what she may since have become, but she was a lady then, a wronged, deceived, and most unfortunate lady; and your cruelty, your barbarity, if she ever ceased to be an honourable, noble-minded lady made her fall."

"So your very veracious Madame Doon, no doubt, said," sneered Sir Alvic.

"Your heart tells you the same, Sir Alvic. No matter what she may be, she should be Lady Aspa Ulster."

"Bah!" exclaimed the old callous-hearted ruffian. Hugh De Lisle had an object to gain, or he might have buffeted the mocking baronet then, although he believed him to be his father. His eyes flashed with indignant feeling, but he restrained his anger, and continued gravely:

"Having too late discovered the baseness of Ross Chaffton, Aspa Jarles fled from him, leaving his child at the house of Ross Chaffton's mother."

"And that child, what became of it?" demanded the baronet.

"I do not know. Perhaps if you take the trouble to find Ross Chaffton's mother, you may learn," replied Hugh De Lisle. "I have nothing to do with Ross Chaffton's child."

"Come," sneered the baronet, "if what you say be true, you are the child's half-brother."

"Very true, Sir Alvic; but am I attempting to prove that Ross Chaffton's son is my half-brother? I think I have sufficient misfortune in being forced to prove that I am Sir Alvic Ulster's son," retorted Hugh De Lisle, with a scornful bitterness, that

changed the sneer of the baronet into a scowl of rage.

"Having left Ross Chaffton's child at the house of its grandmother," continued Hugh De Lisle, "Aspa Jarles confided me to the care of a man named—but I will not give you the man's name, as it does not affect the fact."

He did not give the name, for he recollected that John Roffton's real name was no doubt known to the baronet, and to mention the name of Sturley would expose John Roffton to the suspicion of the baronet.

"Aspa Jarles confided the care of Sir Alvic's son to a man who still lives to bear witness to my words. She did not intend to abandon the child. She feared pursuit from Ross Chaffton, and capture was almost certain if she were to encumber herself with the boy. She meant to escape from Ross Chaffton, and in time reclaim her child."

"I have no doubt it was very long before she was able, or before she dared to return to London. I have no doubt that she did return; but she did not find her child. The man to whom she confided the infant soon afterwards went to Wales, taking with him two children."

"Two children!" exclaimed Sir Alvic, who was very attentive.

"Two children. One of these was the son of Alvic Ulster and Aspa Jarles," replied Hugh De Lisle.

"And the other?" asked the baronet.

"A nephew of the man of whom I speak. In Wales the children grew up together, one named Hugh De Lisle—that is myself, and the other, my playmate, I remember was called Horace Stanley."

"Horace Stanley!" mused the baronet. "I have heard of that name. Horace Stanley! I have it. He was the captain of the man-of-war that brought me over from Holland a few weeks ago. Captain Horace Stanley, of Her Majesty's frigate the Gladiator. I remember I thought he was very old to be entrusted with the command of so large a ship. Yes, I sailed in his ship, and she afterwards sailed to join Admiral Lord Morton. I saw him but once, and then but a moment, for I was, as I always am, sea-sick, from the moment I put my foot aboard of the Gladiator until I disembarked in England. Horace Stanley, a nephew of some unknown man. Absurd! He cannot be the same of whom this young man speaks. Impossible. Captain Horace Stanley is quite seventy years old."

All this flashed through the brain of the baronet in an instant, but he did not interrupt the speaker, who continued:

"The man who carried us to Wales did not remain there with us, but, leaving us under the care of a French soldier and his wife, departed. How long we remained in Wales I cannot tell, but both Horace Stanley and I were stont young lads when the Frenchman and his wife embarked with us for France."

"You, of course, remember the name of the Frenchman?" said the baronet.

"Perfectly. His name was Pierre Langville, a one-armed, one-eyed old soldier if he lives now, though then, I mean when we set sail for France, he was probably about forty years of age, and a very crabbed, surly fellow. On our way to France we were encountered by a gale, and our ship foundered. Among those who were saved were Langville, his wife and myself. Horace Stanley was probably drowned, as we never saw him nor heard of him afterwards. Now, Madame Doon could only tell me that she saw me placed in the arms of the man whose name I have mentioned, and he carried me to Wales. She saw him after his return to London, and he told her that he had left the two children, Hugh De Lisle and Horace Stanley, with the Frenchman, Langville."

"If that other child, Horace Stanley, were living, would he not have as much right as you have to claim that he was the son of Alvic Ulster and Aspa Jarles?" asked the baronet.

"No, for Madame Doon said that Hugh De Lisle was the name given by Aspa Jarles to her son. Aspa Jarles would not name her son after his father, for that father had made her hate and abhor the name. Neither would she give it the name of Chaffton, for she hated and abhorred that name also. She would not name her son after her own father, for she had no cause to love nor to respect her father. She had relatives among the Fitz-Osborns, and among them was one named Hugh De Lisle Fitz-Osborn. This relation had been kind to her, and she named me, her son, after him, omitting the family name, Fitz-Osborn."

"Was Madame Doon positive that such was the name Aspa Jarles gave to her son—the son of Alvic Ulster?" asked the baronet.

"She was positive. But I found corroborative evidence," replied Hugh De Lisle. "I will first

state that after my arrival in France I lived several years with Pierre Langville, learning the art of swordmaking, in which he was very expert, though he had but one arm and one eye. But his treatment became so brutal towards me, that while yet a youth I ran away from him back to England, enlisted in the army, and soon becoming a good soldier, was rapidly promoted and on the road to still higher promotion, when you put an end, for a time, to my career."

"After having lost sight of Langville and his wife for several years, I fell in with his wife, soon afterwards I met with Madame Doon, but a few weeks ago, and we recognized each other."

"I had no love for her, for she had treated me very cruelly in my childhood. But she had become old and decrepit, her husband had deserted her, and I pitied her condition. I gave her a few crowns and asked her as a return for the gift, to tell me all she knew of my parentage. She replied:

"You are the son of a great man who was never married to your mother, Hugh De Lisle. He is a general in the English army, and his name is Sir Alvic Ulster. Your mother's name was Aspa Jarles."

"This information coincided with Madame Doon's story. But as I have stated, Madame Doon had seen the proofs of the marriage."

"Which proofs, young man, could not establish your paternity," remarked the baronet.

"It was pleasant to know, at least," replied Hugh De Lisle, "that my mother was not an evil woman. Langville's wife then gave me the name of the man who had confided me to her husband's care, and I recognized the name as one borne by a man well known to me. She gave me this cornelian seal, which she said was in a ring tied around my neck with a ribbon, when the man whose name I have not mentioned, placed me in the care of her husband."

Hugh De Lisle gave the baronet a cornelian stone upon which were engraved the Ulster arms and crest, with the letters "A. U."

Sir Alvic started visibly when he recognized in this cornelian a stone once set in a ring worn by him—a ring which he had given to Aspa Jarles.

"You see them, sir," continued Hugh De Lisle, "your initials and the crest as well as the arms of the Ulster family, Sir Alvic," he said, "with a seal exactly like that with which you sealed my death-warrant, after you had signed it."

With all the cruel hardness of the baronet's nature, he could but shudder at the solemn accusation. If Hugh De Lisle were his son, and certainly he was producing proof after proof, then Sir Alvic had signed with hasty eagerness the death-warrant of his own child.

"The other ring? The smaller one," he said, returning the stone. "How came that in your possession?"

"I cannot tell, for I do not know. I have had it as long as I can remember," replied Hugh De Lisle. "I have told you my reasons for believing that I am your son, and I sum them up thus:

"You were married to Aspa Jarles. A son sprang from that marriage. Aspa Jarles gave that son the name of Hugh De Lisle. She gave that son with that name, and with that stone you have recognized as having been yours, into the care of a man whom I know, who placed that son with that name and that stone under the care of Pierre Langville. I am that son."

"I am so sure of it that my conviction has saved your life, Sir Alvic Ulster. Before I met Madame Doon I had left to me but one purpose to achieve. But one, and then I intended, if not slain in attaining that purpose, to go and throw away my life in battling against the foes of England."

"To slay you, Sir Alvic Ulster, was my purpose. You know now that I could have done it, can do it now, and escape by that window as I entered. But I cannot strike a man whom I believe to be my father. You merit death by my hands, as man to man, for you destroyed my honourable name and sought to destroy my life."

"But you are my father; at least, I believe you are, and I spare you. I demand of you something in return, Sir Alvic."

"What do you demand, Captain Hugh De Lisle?" asked the baronet, somewhat awed by the lofty bearing of a man whose courage he knew to be dauntless, and whose prowess had been the pride and admiration of the English army. "What do you demand of me, sir?"

"That you sign this declaration," said Hugh De Lisle, producing a carefully-preserved document from his bosom. "There are pens and ink upon the table near you; your seal is there, also. There is nothing degrading in this writing. Read it and sign it."

"And if I refuse, young man?" demanded the baronet, as he took the paper.

"If you refuse," replied Hugh De Lisle, "I will appeal in person to the queen, and then all the world will know that Sir Alvick Ulster condemned his own son to death, because that son resembled Lord Hayward Fitz-Osborn, whom men say Sir Alvick Ulster basely murdered, that he might wed his widow."

Sir Alvick shrank from the terrible menace, for he knew how gladly his enemies at court would seize upon these charges, and use them against him. He could not face the noble expression of indignant accusation blazing in every feature of Hugh De Lisle, and so cast his eyes upon the writing, which read thus:

"I, Sir Alvick Ulster, Baronet of Ulster, and Major-General of Her Majesty's Army, having reconsidered the charges I caused to be preferred against Captain Sir Hugh De Lisle, Brevet-Major of Cavalry, 18th Regiment, H.M.A., do declare, under my hand and seal, that each and every charge was an error, arising from misrepresentations and false statements made to me; and, furthermore, that I know now Captain Hugh De Lisle was a good and faithful officer, and true subject of Her Majesty."

"I humbly pray Her Royal Majesty, the Queen, to annul the findings and sentence of the court-martial, whereby Captain Hugh De Lisle was condemned to be shot as a traitor, and that his rank and title in Her Majesty's Army be fully restored to him."

"You perceive, Sir Alvick, that I have carefully avoided any humiliating confession."

Sir Alvick read the paper over twice, and then turning to the table, wrote a few lines, and said to De Lisle:

"I will sign your paper, Captain De Lisle, if you will sign mine."

"Read it, Sir Alvick."

The baronet read what he had written, which was a complete renunciation by Hugh De Lisle of all claims which he might possess to be established as son and heir of Sir Alvick Ulster.

"I will not sign it, Sir Alvick," said Hugh De Lisle, firmly. "Not because I intend ever to urge my claims, be assured of that. But it may be that my mother, if she lives, may be injured by my signing that paper; nor shall I sign myself illegitimate and willing to remain under the brand of illegitimacy. Nor am I here," he added, haughtily, "to exchange conditions with you. Sign and seal, Sir Alvick."

The baronet, who had hoped to be able to use Hugh De Lisle's signature against claims which might be set up against himself, scowled darkly, but made no comment.

He expected to prevent the escape of the bold intruder from the Manor, and so signed and sealed the writing presented by Hugh De Lisle, saying, as he gave it to him, with almost a shout:

"Take it, in heaven's name!"

As soon as the baronet gave the signal he and Lady Matilda had agreed upon, a furious attempt was made by those who had noiselessly been placed without, to open the door of the study.

Hugh De Lisle understood the cause of the attempt instantly, and with a bound reached the door, which he had taken the precaution to lock, rapidly shot upper and lower bolts into their fastenings, then placed the bar across the door, and facing the baronet, said fiercely, as he drew his pistols:

"Cowardly and treacherous man, you merit death, though it be by the hand of your own son!"

Sir Alvick was appalled by his imminent danger, but he had no time for thought. Hugh De Lisle, who at first seemed about to slay him, suddenly thrust his pistols into his bosom and bounded upon the baronet with the fierceness of a tiger.

Sir Alvick was a strong and active man, but the soldier who had sprung upon him was far more powerful and agile. Besides, the baronet thought he intended to throttle him, and so found himself bound in his chair, before he was aware that Hugh De Lisle intended only to make him a prisoner.

Even as the soldier sprang forward he snatched off his silken sash, which had served so well in his escape with Evaline, and wound it into a noose, which he adroitly slipped over the baronet's head, and then around the chair, binding his arms to his side with a strength and expertness, which could have been attained only by years of practice in dangerous enterprises of war.

Those without continued to hammer and batter at the door, and Sir Alvick had cause to curse his over-care in making the door so secure against forcible entrance.

"Cut it down!" he cried, struggling in vain to release his hands. "Get axes! Cut it down! The traitor is here!"

"And I have him here!" said Hugh De Lisle, as he raised the window. "Farewell, Sir Alvick. You would still slay your son. He spares you as he despises you."

With these words Hugh De Lisle disappeared

through the open window, with infinitely more haste than he had used in entering a few hours before.

"He escapes by the window!" shouted the baronet. "See that his escape be cut off! He escapes by the window!"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE words of Sir Alvick Ulster, though yelled at the top of his voice, were not heard, or rather not understood by those who were endeavouring to effect an entrance.

The noise of their furious blows and the confusion of their assault drowned the words of the baronet. They heard his voice, and supposed he was being murdered. This supposition redoubled the fury of their exertions.

The door was unusually stout and well-braced—thanks to the guilty precautions of the baronet against surprise, for somehow he had always had a fear that if ever detection and ruin fell upon him, the attack would be made against him in that room suddenly, and he had resolved never to be taken alive.

Before those without could batter down the door, Sir Alvick had freed himself from his bonds. He sprang at the bolts and bars, and cast them aside with furious haste. But the stout lock still held him and the others at bay. Hugh De Lisle had the key, and the lock must be forced.

The baronet glanced about for some heavy implement, and espying a heavy mace or club near the effigy, seized it, and rained a shower of blows upon the lock, shattered it, and the door sprang open.

Lord Peter, Lady Matilda, and six or eight men were upon the threshold, several of the party bearing torches.

"He escaped by the window!" shouted the baronet fiercely. "Has no one hurried to intercept him? Away with you, ye loons! Around to the courtyard under my study-window. There is yet time to intercept the villain!"

Several of the men hurried away, and with them Lord Peter, who longed to have the bold intruder in his power.

Sir Alvick turned to Lady Matilda, and said eagerly:

"Have you caught the girl? Where is Evaline?"

"My women have searched everywhere for her, but in vain," said Lady Matilda.

"I fear she has escaped from the house," remarked the vexed baronet. "But if so, she cannot go far in the tempest. She must seek shelter speedily. We can recapture her before long, if that fellow Hugh De Lisle does not escape also and meet her."

"I am sure she is still somewhere in the Manor," said Lady Matilda. "There are so many rooms, closets, and hiding-places that she can easily secrete herself."

"I have placed a servant in every hall, telling them that Evaline has suddenly gone wild—not dangerously, or the cowards would fly from her—only slightly so. All love her, and if they see her, will do their best to restrain her from escaping."

"So the whole household is aroused?" asked Sir Alvick in an irritated tone. "It is well there are no guests to see and hear."

"You forgot Mr. Hassan Wharfe and his two attendants."

"They be cursed!" exclaimed the baronet.

"And but an half hour or so ago," continued Lady Matilda, "Caton admitted two benighted travellers."

"Who are they?"

"I did not stop to ask their names, but bade Caton see to their wants."

"No matter; let us go to the library, and if Hugh De Lisle has escaped, let us calm the household, dismiss all to bed, and look our peril in the face. Has Roffton returned from the gamekeeper's?"

"Not yet; and unless we capture Evaline, we shall need no chaplain."

"Very true," growled the baronet. "But let us go to the library at once. This trouble has come upon us like a tempest. We must bend and let it pass over us."

The baronet and his no less perplexed lady hurried away to the library, where we will leave them for a time and return to Hugh De Lisle.

This daring and active young man, on disappearing from the window of the baronet's study, had no intention to leave the Manor-house immediately. He knew that before he could descend to the courtyard below, either that the baronet might free himself from his bonds and open the door, or that those hammering so fiercely at the door might batter it down.

He remembered, too, that the baronet had shouted that he was escaping by means of the window, and fearing capture in the courtyard, he resolved to boldly re-enter the house and effect his escape at a safer opportunity.

Some days before he had sealed the deep walls of

Ulster Manor, and he had then secretly noted the outside of the building, with that keen and experienced observation and judgment which had made him famous in the army. That which would have seemed impossible to a civilian was done with ease by Hugh De Lisle. To him a jutting fragment of stone or wood was as a good stout foothold to other men, and after leaving the baronet's window, instead of descending, he moved along a narrow ledge for a few feet, and then clambering up over a slope of the eaves, was again on the roof.

Along this he crept cautiously until he reached the same trap-door through which he had twice passed on that night, and within as many hours.

Descending boldly, he was again within the house, while his enemies were eagerly seeking him without.

The interior of the house was totally unfamiliar to him, except the baronet's study and the turret chamber, into neither of which he desired again to enter.

If possible, he wished to learn whether Evaline Ulster had escaped or been recaptured. He resolved, therefore, to glide about from hall to corridor, here and there, to crouch and hide as circumstances might demand, before he left the Manor. It was necessary that he should proceed with the utmost caution, for if seen by any one an immediate alarm would be made.

There was much to shake the resolution of the boldest, but Hugh De Lisle for years had walked amid the guarded camps of France, holding his life, as it were, in the hollow of his hand, from which it might be struck at any moment by a single false step.

With slow and noiseless feet he moved forward. His boots were soaked with rain, and, therefore, he had no need to draw them off, for their soles, soft, spongy and elastic, returned no sound as he trod on tip-toe.

Down the first flight of stairs he came to the stole, and then along a dark, deserted hall. The manor-mansion was as large as the famous inns of London in the days of Edward IV., and to Hugh De Lisle this vast number of vacant rooms was remarkable, and exceedingly bewildering.

He moved on unmolested, until he arrived at the door of a room where he heard the sound of voices. The door was slightly ajar, and as Hugh De Lisle paused near it, he heard distinctly these words:

"I believe the clamour has subsided, admiral. So we may as well go to bed."

"I know that voice!" mentally exclaimed Hugh De Lisle, rejoiced to his heart's core. "It is my late acquaintance, Captain Frank Saybyrd, whose life I saved in London a few days ago. I could recognize it among a thousand. But who is his companion? He called him admiral. Now, if he be a fighting admiral, I know him well."

"I am glad to hear it, Captain Frank," said the other occupant of the room, "for the supper and port have made me drowsy. Pray close and bolt the door, for it is only when at sea that a man is safe."

Hugh De Lisle's hand was upon the knob of the door instantly, and without a moment's hesitation he swung it wide open, strode into the room, closed the door, and placing his back against it, faced the two gentlemen within.

Both clapped their hands upon the hilts of their swords, as they were thus suddenly confronted. Nor was the appearance of the intruder one to be kindly entertained without a more formal introduction.

His tall, powerful figure, daring and aggressive posture, his drenched and bedraggled garments, wet and soiled with the mould of the roof over which he had crept, crawled, and dragged himself, his long locks dripping and dark, his slouched hat with its black, saturated plumes, and the suddenness of his entrance, were more than enough to cause the two gentlemen to grasp the hilts of their swords, and to make bluff and hasty old Lord Morton exclaim:

"What do you want here, man?"

"Concealment and friendship, Lord Henry," replied Hugh De Lisle, tossing aside his hat, and clearing his face of his wet looks. "I aided both of you once, aid me now."

"By Jupiter!" exclaimed Lord Henry, as he stared at the intruder, "this is the gentleman who rescued us from the clubs of the London apprentices on London Bridge. Be they lawyers or Turks, Frenchmen or devils, and they are all of the same kidney, my lad, Henry Ascham will back you," added the free-spoken nobleman of the sea, instantly drawing his sword. "Where are the heathens?"

"My friend," said Captain Frank, advancing and extending his hand to Hugh De Lisle, "be assured that we will defend you at the risk of our lives, for but for you both of us would have been tossed from London Bridge into the Thames. Are you pursued?"

"Like a hare by the hounds," replied De Lisle,

bolting the door, "but my enemies are seeking me without. I did not tell you my name yonder in London—"

"No," interrupted Lord Morton, shaking him heartily by the hand. "You rushed in and scattered those rascally apprentices, who wished to duck us because I boxed the ears of one of them for his impertinence, and then you left us without so much as telling us your name."

"My name is Hugh De Lisle, and captain of cavalry in Her Majesty's army."

"I have heard of you," said Lord Morton heartily, and then with a start adding: "By Jove! you can't be he—the man, I mean, who was shot for a traitor?"

"I never was a traitor, though I was condemned to be shot," replied Hugh De Lisle, proudly. "I am the Hugh De Lisle of whom you have heard, and I am here, in this house, to prove that I am and was as loyal and true a man as he who signed my death-warrant."

"And that was Sir Alvis Ulster," remarked Lord Henry, as his bronzed but noble features grew grave. "I have heard of the many exploits of Captain Hugh De Lisle, and, by my breath, my lad, I was sorry to hear that he had tried to sell his country to the beggarly Frenchmen."

"The report was false, my lord," replied Hugh De Lisle, "as you may see by reading this paper, scarcely dry from the pen of Sir Alvis himself."

The admiral took the paper Hugh De Lisle gave him, read it, and exclaimed as he passed it into the hands of Captain Frank:

"It is a full clearance, my brave fellow, and I know the baronet's signature well. But why are you now in jeopardy?"

"The sentence of death is still upon my head, Lord Henry, and if taken, I am at the mercy of the man who captures me."

"Ah, that is true, until you are protected by a royal pardon," replied Lord Morton. "You should possess that as soon as possible."

"I think," remarked Captain Frank, "that I heard a rumour in London purporting that Hugh De Lisle was unjustly condemned, and that there was reason to believe that he had escaped—and that he was a great favourite in the army."

"I have friends near the queen," said Hugh De Lisle, "who are inquiring into the proceedings of the court-martial; but, impatient of the tedious delay in the matter, I resolved to risk a personal interview with Sir Alvis Ulster himself, and obtain his signature to that paper."

"You were fortunate to procure it, captain, for report says he would sooner have ten men shot than pardon one. Bad weather drove Captain Frank and me to seek shelter here until morning, or Harry Ascham would have seen Alvis Ulster three times hanged, before he would have dropped anchor in Ulster Manor."

Hugh De Lisle narrated briefly how he had obtained the fierce baronet's signature, not mentioning, however, that he supposed himself to be Sir Alvis's son, and Captain Frank promptly said:

"You must move fast to use this paper, for the baronet may justly assert that you have obtained it by force and intimidation. If ever you gain her Majesty's pardon, you are at least safe from molestation until the findings of the court-martial shall have been decided upon. This paper should be placed in the hands of the queen immediately, and before Sir Alvis Ulster can advise her how it was obtained."

"No doubt of that," remarked Lord Morton. "But Sir Alvis never was a laggard. They say he made no delay in wedding the widow of the last Marquis of Galmount, egad!"

"You saved our lives in London," continued Captain Frank, "and, if possible, I will save yours, Captain Hugh De Lisle. Confide the paper to my care, and I will myself place it under the eye of the queen. She is upon a royal tour, and I heard yesterday that the royal train would reach Ulsterborough by to-morrow noon, if not by last night. This is an affair of life or death to you, for Sir Alvis is a military officer of high rank, and can order you to instant execution if you fall into his hands. In fact, an escaped convict, civil or military, is outlawed. Will you confide this paper to me?"

"Most willingly," replied Hugh De Lisle. "It would be valueless to me should Sir Alvis capture me, and for certain potent reasons I desire to remain in this neighbourhood for a time at least."

"Then I will immediately ride over to Ulsterborough. The queen may have arrived there yesterday, and, if so, I am sure that by noon I can place in your hands the royal pardon of her Majesty," said Captain Frank, as he prepared for instant departure.

"Spoken like a noble heart, as you were ever, my boy," cried the bluff Lord Morton, clapping his hand upon the shoulder of his captain. "I have half a

mind to ride with you, my lad, if it were only to get out of this harbourage of that cranky old tyrant. I'll go! Make a noise, rouse some of the lubberly lackeys, and let them saddle our horses at once. Let us bear away from this—"

"No," urged Captain Frank, somewhat amused by the impetuosity of the old sailor nobleman. "Do you remain, my lord, to protect Captain De Lisle, should he be captured?"

"Captured!" roared the chivalrous seaman. "May I never see Morton Hall, Lady Constance, and my two children again, if Sir Alvis Ulster, or Bolster, or any other Ster, shall lay a finger on the lad who saved me from a dog's death in the Thames!"

"My dear friend and admiral," said Captain Frank, as his handsome face grew very grave, "you are not at sea—"

"Wish I was, by faith I do," broke in the impetuous sailor. "No I don't, for I am dying to be at home. But for that I'd never come ashore. My lads, I'm full fifty years old, and my hair is nearly white, but if either of you think a man of fifty can't love as earnestly as you young men of twenty-five, you are a pair of fools. But I am yawning—can't help it. I never was a happy man until I married—some ten years ago, Captain De Lisle—the handsomest and the best woman in all England. If any man sayeth to the contrary he lies, and Harry Ascham can prove—"

"Come, admiral," interrupted Captain Frank, "I must be off."

"I am sorry for it, Frank, but you are always right. Be as speedy as you can, for I am dying to hurry on for Morton Hall, where my lady awaits me."

"I will make all the haste I can, Lord Henry," replied Captain Frank. "But remember to make no resistance to the arrest of our friend Hugh De Lisle, should such mischance occur. Delay proceedings as much as possible, but use no violence. I am disobeying the parting injunction of Lady Morton, who bade me never leave your side, but—"

"But in a case like this," exclaimed Lord Morton, "she would bid you take me with you, you dog. But go on. I will be as cool as a Dutchman over a full mug of beer."

"How can I ever hope to repay you, Captain Saybyrd?" began Hugh De Lisle. But the gallant captain stopped his thanks, saying:

"I am repaying you, Captain De Lisle. You saved my life, I verily believe, and we shall not be even until I place in your hands the pardon of the queen."

With these words Captain Frank Saybyrd, commander of Admiral Morton's flagship Albion, left the room, to seek someone who should saddle him a horse forthwith.

"He hath a heart as big as a four-decker," said Lord Morton, warmly, when alone with Hugh De Lisle.

The care of old Caton had provided ample refreshments for the two benighted travellers, and as Lord Morton's quick eye remarked the wan and wearied look in Hugh De Lisle's face, he said:

"You have need of food and wine, my lad, so fall to. You may be clapped into a dungeon before dawn and fare like a church mouse the day after. Eat—for next to loving my wife and children, may I die in a hospital if I do not love to eat, and see hungry people eat. If I had my wish, I'd feed all the hungry in the world. In my cruiser, there's enough misery rationed out to man without giving him an appetite, and not giving him food. Fall to and enjoy. You are preying on the spoils of your enemy, egad! This is no inn, but may I be a swab hereafter if I do not pay for my entertainment. Heard you ever of Lady Constance Morton, Captain De Lisle?"

Hugh De Lisle, feeling greatly the need of food, for many hours had elapsed since anything had passed his lips, had not hesitated to avail himself of the refreshments upon the table. He replied to the nobleman's abrupt question:

"You speak of your wife, Lord Henry?"

"My wife, my lad. For many years I lived without a wife. More fool I. But one day I fell in with a lady, some thirty years old; she was fair, beautiful and as graceful as a yacht on a moon-lit sea with all sails set and full. I had seen thousands of women and as beautiful women before, but she made me strike my flag at sight. I loved her at once, and I loved her more and more until she became Lady Morton. And since then I adore her. She was poor—I was rich, and I was glad of that. She said she had neither dower, noble blood, family, nor friends—an orphan, compelled to teach and sew for a livelihood. All the better for that. None of your four-deckers, full sail, seventy gun high-fliers. A modest, industrious, gentle, beautiful woman! and though I didn't dare hope it, she saw something in rough Ascham, simple Captain Ascham then, to

love. So we married, and if ever a man, high or low, found a better wife, may I be fondered. She never wanted to go to court and play the butterfly. She loved me, my home, and my children."

"Your lordship's children?" remarked Hugh De Lisle, with a smile.

"My two boys, Neddle and Harry, the two pearls of price she has borne me, captain. If ever you stray near Morton Hall—so many a long and weary mile away," added the warm-hearted nobleman of the sea, with a sigh, "you incur my eternal wrath if you do not make it your home for a thousand and as many more days. I am on my way thither, unexpectedly. My fleet was ordered home, to Portsmouth, for inspection—for inspection, egad! when we were ready to fog the French fleet old Louis set sail. But I am glad, since it gives me a chance to see Morton Hall so soon again. I was on my way to my lady and my boys, and may I not curse the night of storm that halts me on my way? No, since it has enabled me, perhaps, to repay Captain Hugh De Lisle for the kindness he did me and Frank yonder in London. But I would I were home in Morton Hall—the kindness being repaid, captain; for of late I have had a sinking, a heaviness of the heart, as if one of life's tornadoes was gathering not far off, and about to burst upon me, and perhaps send all my happiness to the bottom."

"I hope not, Lord Henry."

"Oh, so do I. Hope is the sheet-anchor of life, but I wish I had fair news from Morton Hall. Hie! Here comes the noise of many feet," said Lord Henry, rising from his chair, and as he rose an imperative rapping at the door startled him and Hugh De Lisle.

"Open this door," demanded a voice without, and Hugh De Lisle grew slightly pale as he recognized the harsh and angry tones of Sir Alvis Ulster.

(To be continued.)

FACETIE.

"HENRIETTA," said a landlady to her new girl, "when there's bad news, particularly private afflictions, always let the boarders know it before dinner. It may seem strange to you, Henrietta, but such things make a great difference in the eating in the course of a year."

BY A MARRIED MAN.—Here is an amended quotation, by a married man, who has been waiting for his wife, "to put her things on."

"Hope springs eternal in the husband's breast; Wives never are, but always to be dressed."

WANTED.—A pair of spectacles to suit the eyes of potatoes. The club with which an idea struck the poet. A stick to measure narrow escapes. The identical hook and line with which an angler caught a cord. An umbrella used in the reign of tyrants. A knot from the board a man paid seven shillings a week for.

THE BOY AND THE SPELLING-BOOK.

A small boy stepped into a book-shop and inquired the price of a spelling-book. On being told that they were sixpence a-piece, and being possessed of but fivepence, he was completely nonplussed. At length an idea seemed to have struck him. Says he:

"Mister, can't you find me one that is torn that you will let me have for fivepence?"

The clerk looked in vain. The boy was disappointed. At length another idea seemed to strike him.

"Please, mister, can't you tear one?"

THERE is a great competition in snakes between the inhabitants on rival sides of the Canada line, which is induced by the belief that a "big snake" in a contiguous lake is a great advantage to a place of summer resort. A Canada editor frankly says: "Our Vermont neighbours are a little ahead of us just now on the big-snake question, but next week we shall have a serpent in our pond that will clean out everything on the Yankee side of the line, and summer boarders should engage rooms at once!"

THE following anecdote is related of the eldest son of the Crown Prince of Prussia. It is the custom for the young Princes and Princesses to undergo the operation of a shower-bath every morning. Now Prince Heinrich (a young gentleman six years of age) invariably objected to the process in the strongest manner whenever the painful moment arrived. This was reported by the attendants to the Crown Prince, who gave orders that the next time Prince Heinrich made any objection to his bath he was to have his own way. Accordingly, next morning Prince Heinrich escaped the dreaded shower-bath; but when he went into the garden with his brother and sister to play, he was astonished to see that while the sentinel presented arms as usual to

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A SUBSCRIBER.—All oils, extracts, and essences are procurable at most respectable chemists.

A CONSTANT READER.—The best book you can procure is a commercial directory, in which you will find a list of publishers.

WILLINGS.—1. The engagement ring for a lady is worn on the fourth finger of the right hand, and on the fore-finger of the left for a gentleman. 2. Handwriting good.

MAGGIE.—Few things are more necessary to success in life than fondness of character; with it a man can rarely fail, without it he can rarely succeed.

FAMILY.—Barks may be preserved by placing them in coarse brown paper bags, and hanging them up in some airy and dry situation, until all the extraneous moisture has evaporated.

CLAUDE.—Accent is a particular stress or force of the voice upon certain syllables or words; a mark is placed over the syllable, upon which the stress or force of the voice should be placed.

ELLIS.—The clothing of our minds should certainly be regarded before that of our bodies; to betray in conversation a corrupt imagination, is a much greater offence than any other imaginable.

OSCAR.—Black-mail was a compulsory payment made in some parts of Scotland by the Lowlanders to the Highlanders, for the protection of their cattle. It existed till within a few months of the outbreak of the rebellion in 1745.

POETRY.—"The Farewell," and "Content," by R. Crowan. "The Heart's a Tender Instrument," by Modern Sappho. We regret to say the performance not being equal to the evident intention, we must decline them with thanks.

H. BEVANS.—Take 4 parts of silver dust, 16 parts of common salt, 14 parts of sal ammoniac, and 1 part of bichloride of mercury, mix with water to a paste. Apply with a piece of soft leather; the article must be previously cleaned.

S. GODFREY.—Your best remedy to prevent stooping would be to have your work (if the nature of it will allow of your doing so) raised higher, so as to prevent the necessity of your bending towards it.

STANTON.—The alteration of a deed of conveyance after execution, though it may deprive the covenantor of all right to sue upon the covenants therein contained, does not affect the ownership of the property conveyed.

FELIX.—Except as regards foreign and colonial letters about to be prepaid in money, a postmaster is not bound to weigh any letters or other packets for the public, though he may do so, if his duty be not thereby impeded.

ELLIS.—An agreement to give permanent employment, is received an extending only to a substantive and reasonable period of time, and that there shall be no immediate and peremptory dismissal, without cause.

AULD REKKIE.—To make the whiskers grow, use the following lotion:—3 oz. of Eau de Cologne, 3 drachms of tincture of cantharides, 10 drops of rosemary, or oil of lavender. Mix well, rub it in once or twice a day. If the skin become tender, discontinue for a time, or apply at longer intervals.

STANLEY.—To obtain a good knowledge of pronunciation, it is advisable to listen to the examples given by good speakers, and by educated persons; the pronunciation of words is learned to a great extent by imitation, just as birds acquire the notes of other birds near them.

VICTOR.—Additors are slaughter-houses for cattle; five near Paris were erected by a decree of Napoleon I. in 1810, the finest near Montmartre. About 48,000 were raised from them in 1842. An abattoir was erected at Edinburgh in 1851; they now form part of the new London Metropolitan Cattle-Market, opened in 1855.

PAMELA.—Economy is the parent of integrity, liberty, and of ease, and the sister of temperance, cheerfulness, and health. Profuseness, on the contrary, is a cruel and crafty demon, that gradually involves her followers in dependence and debts; that is, fetters them with iron that enters into their souls.

G. GART.—Conseil de Fruchthomme, or "council of good and true men," means a mixed council of master tradesmen and workmen for the decision of disputes between master and man. After the peace of 1815, councils of this description were established by law at several towns in Rhenish Prussia, where they are now called "Tribunaux d'Industrie," or courts of trade, business, arts, and manufactures.

A TRUE WELCHMAN.—There are various kinds of lacquers. We give the five following recipes:—1st. Three ounces of seed-lac, one ounce of turpentine, a quarter of an ounce of dragon's blood, one pint of alcohol; digest for a week, frequently shaking, decant and filter. This is deep gold coloured.—2nd. One pound of ground turmeric, one ounce and a half of gamboge, three pounds and a half of gum sandarach,

three-quarters of a pound of powdered shellac, two gallons of rectified spirits of wine; dissolve, strain, and add one pint of turpentine varnish. This is gold-coloured.—3rd. Three pounds of Spanish annatto, one pound of dragon's blood, three pounds and a quarter of gum sandarach, two gallons of rectified spirit, one quart of turpentine varnish; dissolve and mix as the last. This is red-coloured.—4th. One ounce of gamboge, cut small, three ounces of Cape aloes, one pound of pale shellac, two gallons of rectified spirit; dissolve and mix like No. 2. This is pale brass-coloured.—5th. A quarter of a pound each of seed-lac, dragon's blood, annatto and gamboge, one ounce of saffron, ten pints of rectified spirits of wine; dissolve and mix like No. 2.

GODFREY.—Necrology is derived from the Greek word *nekros*, dead, and *logos*, a discourse, literally meaning a lecture on a deceased person; but it was anciently applied to a book kept in the monasteries and churches, in which were registered the benefactors to the same, the time of their deaths, &c.; as also those of the priors and abbots.

J. A. B.—An excellent varnish may be made in the following manner, for maps, prints, drawings; also to prepare tracing paper, and to transfer drawings. Take equal parts of genuine pale Canada balsam, and rectified oil of turpentine; mix well, place the bottle in warm water, shake it, set it aside in a moderately warm place, and in a week pour it off clear.

JOK.—1. To promote the growth of the hair, and make it curl, the following pomade will be found useful:— $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of beef marrow, soaked in several waters, melted and strained, 1 oz. of tincture of cantharides (made by soaking for a week 1 drachm of powdered cantharides in 1 oz. of proof spirit) and 12 drops of bergamot. 2. You cannot brush the hair too much.

CORDELLA.—Dress is, of course, so regulated by fashion that it depends upon the refinement and taste of the bride, to choose that which will be useful and elegant hereafter; the dress of a bridemaid should be such as to form a pretty contrast to that of the bride; just sufficient to make her the cynosure of all eyes. It is customary for the bridegroom, if able, and of a generous disposition, to present the bride-maid with a wedding-dress, should there be only one.

OVERWORKED.

Silent, with folded hands and drooping head;
The work-girl sits beside her poor pine table;
Her fingers, that all day have plied the thread,
Are idle now because no longer able.

The gaudy stuffs that vex her aching sight
Seem strangely out of place and out of keeping
In that high attic, where the shadowy night
Like some black phantom, up the wall is creeping.

Silent she sits, and on her thin, pale face
There rests a shade of patient, hopeless sadness;
In all her life, since childhood, she can trace
Scarce anything that wears the look of gladness.

Her wandering thoughts glide back down life's stream,
To those far shores grown indistinct with distance,
And mid the scenes that fill her waking dream,
She half forgets the misery of existence.

And lives in blissful fancy off again
The vanished joys that once her soul had tasted,
While yet her days were innocent of pain,
Ere yet her youth and freshness both were wasted.

The shadows gather round her in the room,
While still she dreams of that which can be never;
Unmindful of the twilight's deepening gloom,
She gazes back into the vast forever.

Ah, if our eyes possessed the power to look
Upon the future, dim and all uncertain,
And read our lives as in an open book,
What one of us would dare to lift the curtain!

N. G. S.

JAMES.—Formerly the punishment for stealing swans' eggs from the nest was imprisonment for a year and a day, with a fine at the will of the sovereign. As the law now stands, persons not having the right of killing game upon any land, nor having permission from the person entitled to such right, are prohibited by the statute from taking or destroying the nests or eggs of swans, under a penalty not exceeding 5s. for every egg.

CALCIUM.—1. Chloroform is composed of carbon, hydrogen, and chlorine; it is manufactured from alcohol, water, and bleaching powder; it was discovered by Soubeiran in 1831, and its composition was determined by Dumas in 1834. 2. The following are a few of the chemicals used in experiments: sulphuric acid, ammonia, nitric acid, potassium, muriatic acid, phosphorus, alcohol; also dry powders, such as starch, sugar, sulphur, carbonate of soda, &c.

G. G.—Epigrams derive their origin from the inscriptions placed by the ancients on their tomb. Marcus Valerius Martialis, the celebrated Latin epigrammatist, who flourished about A.D. 83, is said to have excelled all others, ancient or modern. The following Latin epigram, on the miracle of our Saviour turning water into wine at Cana, is given as an example:—"Vultis et erubescit tympha publica Divinæ—the modest water saw its God, and blushed."

S. A. W.—To make apple marmalade, peel and core 2 lbs. of sub-acid apples, and put them in an enamelled saucepan with 1 pint of cider, or $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of pure wine, and 1 lb. of crushed sugar. Prepare by a gentle heat for three hours or more, until the fruit is very soft, then squeeze it first through a colander, and then through a sieve; if not sufficiently sweet, add powdered sugar to suit your taste, and put it into jars made air-tight by a piece of wet bladder; it is delicious eaten with milk or cream.

HUES C.—1. To render the hands white and soft, make the following unguent: one quarter of a fluid ounce each of tincture of bell, tincture of benzoin, and tincture of balsam of Peru, and gradually mix with them a quarter of a pint of distilled elder-water, when a milky emulsive fluid will be the result; then have ready melted in a basin, half an ounce each of virgin wax and spermaceti, together with a quarter of a pound of almond oil; this is best done by placing the ingredients in a basin, into a small saucepan of boiling water; finally the tincture and water mixture is to be gradually poured into the basin of oil, &c., beating rapidly with a fork; the unguent then acquires a beautiful snow-

white creamy consistency, which finally sets when quite cold; rub some of this over the hands upon going to bed, and wear an old pair of kid gloves. 2. Any bookbinder will get them bound for you. 3. Good, with the exception of being a little too large.

AGATHA.—The Christmas-tree is of German origin, and is ascribed to Luther, the Reformer; it is only in Germany where it deserves the name; it is not a toy simply for boys and girls, but a great and glorious institution, for around the Christmas-tree, on the eve of the great festival, are assembled together, as one large family, all the members of the same household; no one returns empty-handed from its genial influence, and all, even the lowliest and poorest, contribute to make it holy, by surrounding it with loving gifts and remembrances.

ALEX WAINWRIGHT.—To whiten the skin, take 1 oz. of sweet almonds, $\frac{1}{2}$ a drachm of any fine white soap, $\frac{1}{2}$ of a pint of rose-water, 1 oz. of spirits of wine, and a few drops of otto of roses; blanch the almonds, and beat them in a mortar until they are a complete paste, then add the soap in the shavings, and again beat up; then add the rose-water by degrees, constantly stirring until the whole forms a creamy emulsion; lastly mix the otto of roses with the spirit, and stir into the mixture by small portions. When finished, the whole must be strained through very fine muslin; it must be used in the same manner as a lotion.

A. S., twenty, medium height, fair, light hair, blue eyes, and good tempered.

MARY, twenty-two, 5 ft. 5 in., dark blue eyes, black curly hair, very industrious, and fond of home. Respondent must be fair, good tempered, and industrious.

EMMA STEELE, thirty-four, dark, medium height. Respondent must have some money, and in any trade but a butcher's.

ROBERT RUSSELL, twenty, 5 ft. 9 in., fair, good looking, has an income of 100l. Respondent must be fair, and domesticated.

J. T. J., twenty-seven, 5 ft. 6 in., fair, hazel eyes, fond of home, income moderate. Respondent must be young, pretty, and affectionate.

W. J. P., twenty-two, 5 ft. 7 in., fair, cheerful, a grocer valuing 500l. per annum. Respondent must be fair, about eighteen or twenty, one who has a little money preferred.

MAUDE, nineteen, tall, blue eyes, fair, golden hair, an accomplished musician, and fond of home, but no fortune. Respondent must be tall, fair, handsome, either in the army or navy.

HARRY SOMERS, twenty-two, handsome, possessed of 800l. per annum, 5 ft. 10 in., has a house in London and in Devonshire. Respondent must be between seventeen and twenty-four, pretty, and amiable.

NELLIE and LIZZIE (twin sisters), twenty, fair, tall, lady-like, and accomplished, incomes 150l. Respondents must be young, gentlemanly, and of steady habits, with good incomes.

JEMIE and ANNETTE—"Jessie," brown hair, and blue eyes, "Annette," dark eyes, and black hair; both are of medium height, and good tempered. Respondent must be respectable, and have a good income.

LIZZIE and ANNIE—"Lizzie," nineteen, tall, fair, good looking, and thoroughly domesticated. "Annie," twenty, dark, tall, good looking, and domesticated. Respondents must be respectable mechanics, with about 100l. per annum.

ANNE and EMILY—"Annie," nineteen, 5 ft. 2 in., dark auburn hair, hazel eyes, good tempered, and domesticated. Respondent must be dark and fond of home. "Emily," eighteen, 4 ft. 9 in., black hair, brown eyes, and in a good business. Respondent must be dark, and a mechanic.

ELIZA and CHARLOTTE—"Eliza," nineteen, 5 ft. dark blue eyes, brown hair, fair, affectionate, good tempered, and fond of home. Respondent must be dark, and a mechanic. "Charlotte," nineteen, 5 ft. 4 in., blue eyes, dark hair, fair, good tempered, and domesticated. Respondent must be dark, steady, and fond of home.

ELLEN and MAUDE—"Ellen," twenty-four, tall, dark brown hair, gray eyes, good tempered, and domesticated. Respondent must be dark, steady, and affectionate, not under twenty-five. "Maude," 5 ft. 2 in., dark brown hair, and eyes, and a cheerful disposition. Respondent must be tall, fair, and good looking, about twenty-four or thirty.

A MERRY TAR and SWAYWAY JACK—"Merry Tar," twenty-three, dark hair and eyes, 5 ft. 8 in., good looking. "Swayway Jack," twenty-five, dark hair and whiskers, blue eyes, and good looking. Both petty officers in H. M. Royal Navy. Respondents must be about twenty-one, and good looking.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

FRANK is responded to by—"Maud," twenty-two, 5 ft. 8 in., black hair, dark eyes and complexion, fond of home, and thoroughly domesticated.

HARRY by—"Lily," nineteen, 5 ft. 6 in., brown hair and eyes, dark complexion, fond of music, and thoroughly domesticated.

A LONELY LAWYER'S CLERK by—"Florence," eighteen, 5 ft. 4 in., fair, light hair, hazel eyes, very affectionate, and thoroughly domesticated.

FLORENCE by—"R. H. M."

EDITH by—"A. E. B."

T. D., ALFRED CLAYTON, and K. L. by—"M. N. O." LIZZIE by—"Hussey Wellington," dark, handsome, has a little money, fond of home; and—"N. J.," respectable, steady, good tempered, and possessed of 1,500l.

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